1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
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Acknowledgments

114 Like many another first book by an academic this one is a somewhat more literate account of material and ideas from my dissertation presented to the anthropology department of the University of Chicago in 1962. Though there is no place to begin in acknowledging the contributions of mentors, I am especially grateful to Milton Singer who served as chairman of my thesis committee and to Fred Eggan—both of whom steered me past as many reefs as they could. Manning Nash and Surajit Sinha similarly contributed at various points as members of the committee. Along the route crucial help was also provided by Robert Redfield, Fred Gearing, Gundar Frank, Morris Morris and McKim Marriott.

114 .122 The fourteen months of field work in India and additional time for research which made this work possible were supported by funds from the Foreign Area Training Program of the Ford Foundation. Investigation of the effects of industrial employment on traditional tribal culture were greatly facilitated by the Tata Iron and Steel Company, which was generous in offering me its facilities and good offices.

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Acknowledgments

• 114 As for the field work itself, I must first of all acknowledge the aid of Marian Orans, who was at the time my wife and full partner in field work. Without her efforts my work would have been very much impoverished. My field assistants, Pius Kisku and Pradhan Murmu, provided assistance far beyond the call of duty. Jai Pal Singh is also to be thanked for having helped to establish my *bona fides* among the Santal. The hospitality of so many other Indian friends shall here have to be acknowledged collectively.

000 Finally I must offer thanks to the Santal as a people for the great generosity they extended to me wherever I went. I think that I have learned from the Santal far more important things than I have been able to express in this book; but these things I carry about as part of myself.

M. O.

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464 organizing principle of membership in social groups and in [178] social interaction.

It is chiefly the southern Santal from the territories adjacent to Jamshedpur who have contributed to its working force, and these are the Santal with whom I have done field work. They [167] come largely from the Dhalbhum subdivision of the Singhbhum district in Bihar, the Mayurbhanj district of Orissa, and from the former princely states of Seraikela and Kharswan, now also in Singhbhum; a few have come from the Manbhum district of Bihar, north of Jamshedpur, and from the Midnapur district of Bengal on the east.

Since Santal industrial workers live both outside and within Jamshedpur, exceptional opportunities were available to com- [121] pare separately the effects of industrial employment and living in an urban environment. Most of the Santal workers live outside the city of Jamshedpur in village-like settlements (*bustees*) of their own construction. Some of these *bustees* were formerly traditional agricultural villages, while others have grown up only since the development of Jamshedpur and the influx of industrial workers. These settlements from which the workers commute daily to Jamshedpur lie from three to ten miles from the city. The smaller number of Santal workers who live within Jamshedpur either occupy Company houses scattered throughout the town or live in one of the *bustees* within the town. [114] Though I spent considerable time with the city Santal occupying Company houses, I unfortunately did not have the time to make more than casual observations of the city *bustee* dwellers. [167] Almost all Santal industrial workers, whether living in Jamshedpur or in a *bustee*, come from native villages within a fifty-mile radius of Jamshedpur.

114 167 The *bustee* in which I did intensive field work, and which I

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Introduction

114 shall call Daredih, was a traditional agricultural village long
167 before Jamshedpur was built; it lies about three miles from the city and while it is the native village of some of its inhabitants, most are migrants from the surrounding countryside. Since even those for whom it is a native village (and who have adjoining agricultural land) generally work in Jamshedpur, it is possible to compare them with the migrant industrial workers so that the effects of migration may be examined. Exclusively rural villages lying far away from Jamshedpur constituted something of a base-line from which to view the urban-industrial effects of Jamshedpur on Santal culture. The rural village in which I spent the most time and which I shall call Fanderkuta, lies in Mayurbhanj about fifty miles from Jamshedpur. Other villages in Mayurbhanj and Seraikela were visited, and one in Mayurbhanj was repeatedly used for control purposes.

128 Since the subject matter at hand is cultural change, a broadly chronological order of presentation has been followed. The base line for change, though constructed from both historical accounts and contemporary observations of rural villages, is treated first. This is followed by an account of those changes associated with the market economy and migration to industrial employment. The most recent Santal historical experience, including the introduction of political democracy and the emergence of an indigenous great tradition, terminates the presentation of the facts of change. On the basis of this historical evidence and with an eye on general theoretical considerations, the final portion of this work is concerned with the rank concession syndrome and its various applications.

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121 acts which represent and give recognition to existing social units. But apart from these official boundary markers, and perhaps even more important, are the "shared understandings" and the countless similar behavior patterns and similar material manifestations of behavior which characterize a people.

184 773 Among the cultural bonds which pertain to all Santal directly (as opposed to those which are exclusively the property of the various component social units of Santal society) is a myth of creation which comes as close to being an official symbol of unity and a constitution as traditional Santal society has attained. However there are numerous versions of this myth due to the wide dispersion of the Santal, and there are very few Santal who are in possession of more than fragments of a complete version. Culshaw reports that the myth is better known among the older generation and suggests that it is dying out; several ceremonies in which it is normally recited appear to be disappearing in the Bankura District of Bengal where Culshaw gathered his data.[2] Since there are also lengthy accounts of the myth in earlier works,[3] one is tempted to accept the conclusion that knowledge of the myth has declined generally. It must, however, be taken into account that it was formerly the custom to find informants who could elaborate an "authoritative" version of tradition. Also, it is often the case among the Santal, as others, that older men become specialists in ritual knowledge, so that absence of such knowledge among the young may not indicate that the knowledge is disappearing.

114 178 773

773 128 Since numerous accounts and several versions of the myth appear in the literature, only those major themes which are almost always present wherever there are Santal will be reported here.

[2] Culshaw 1949.

[3] Dalton 1872; Bodding 1942, originally 1887.

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the Santal" as Culshaw properly describes him.[4] Other "nationally" shared deities of the Grove are *Jaherera*, *Liṭa*, *Gōsāe Era* (Hindi: *Gosain* = pious one), *Mōṛeko* (the Five) and *Tureko* (the Six).[5]

Marañ Buru is regarded as a kind of chief deity, though that honor is sometimes ascribed to Cando (literally "moon," as in Hindi, *chand*) or Siń-Cando (sun-moon) to Ṭhakur, etc. The great variety of names associated almost haphazardly with the notion of "chief" or "biggest" deity is consistent with the acephalous Santal social structure. Nevertheless the Santal do manifest tribal solidarity, and though every house, local lineage, etc., has its own deities, Marañ Buru always receives his portion of sacrifices, gift offerings and prayer. This constitutes another link between the Santal and other Mundari tribes of the region, who share most of these deities.

Sinha has characterized Indian tribals as conceiving of the good life as one with "ample scope for indulgence in pleasure, while maintaining social obligations to corporate group or groups" (Sinha 1959:309). Culshaw similarly begins his chapter on "Dancing, Music, and Poetry" with the comment that the word "*raṣka* meaning 'pleasure' is often on the lips of the Santal, and it is dear to their hearts."[6] One could hardly begin such a chapter differently, for the traditional sense of the word "pleasure" (*raṣka*) makes it virtually synonymous with dancing

[4] Culshaw, *ibid.*

[5] *Jaherera* is sometimes called *Jaher Budhi* ("Old Lady of the Sacred Grove") and is said to be the consort of Marañ Buru. *Liṭa* is prominent in hunting rites; the rainbow is referred to as the "bow of *Liṭa*." As for the Five and Six, not even the most erudite of the Santal seem to have any knowledge of them other than when they are to receive offerings and prayer.

[6] Culshaw, *ibid.*, 39.

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177 What began as a shift resulting from migration to industrial
178 employment and consequent weakening of traditional social
184 bonds may have affected the norms by lessening the stigma of
583 low status traditionally associated with the *NB*.
584 If one may use the term "modernization" to designate those indigenous developments or borrowings which are patently adaptive or characteristic of industrial urban societies, the shift to unarranged marriages with attenuated ceremonial is an example of modernization. Thus, while industrial development and migration to industrial employment have in a number of ways weakened Santal solidarity, the modernization which it has encouraged has in some respects suggested cultural alternatives not characteristic of traditional Hindu society. Insofar as this has been true, modernization has contributed to the maintenance of distinctiveness and solidarity and thereby inhibited
[171] assimilation. Many aspects of modernization, however, are likely to be equally operative among Hindu and Santal, especially in the long run, so that the cultures are made more alike.*

The Decline of Ceremonies in Bustee *and City*

177 Even a casual observer might note that ceremonies in the
178 *bustee* as compared with those in the village are less well at-
184 tended and often attenuated. As for the city Santal, they prac-
796 tice no communal forms of worship like those traditionally performed at the "Sacred Grove" as long as they remain in the city; often they do not even perform ancestor worship in

[114] * Dr. Milton Singer called my attention to the significance of modernization with respect to my data on marriage and ceremonial and pointed out its significance in terms of acculturation and assimilation, though I am of course responsible for the form that his remarks have assumed above.

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Chapter 6 The Political Rank Path

668 In the 1930's, political events external to Santal society began
• 114 to alter profoundly the path that the Santal were treading. What one observes today instead of acculturation and assimilation is a native sociocultural resurgence, but one filled with
[123] apparently paradoxical elements. Though I was unaware of it at the time, the first Santal I met in Jamshedpur confronted me in the course of a few weeks with all of the fundamental questions which this resurgence poses. To introduce these questions I will recount this experience, and with the benefit of hindsight, suggest the directions which answers to the questions posed will take.

It was October of 1957 when I arrived at Jamshedpur, and the city was preparing for Durga Puja, the most elaborately
115 celebrated Hindu festival in Jamshedpur. Company officials had thoughtfully provided me with my first Santal informant, clearly a good model of Company efforts in behalf of tribals. Mr. F. came to Jamshedpur with a high-school education and received further training in the TISCO apprentice school. He had served for fifteen years in the brick kiln works and was

539 (migrated) to the seven-river land Campa[23]. There were two passes, one Cae paka and the other the Campa pass.

In Campa they built a great many forts in order to ensure that enemies should not be able to overcome them. One was the Khairi fort; this was the fort of the Hembrom people; one was the Koenda fort; this belonged to the Kisku people. One was the Campa fort; this belonged to the Murmus. One was the Badoli fort; this belonged to the Marodis; and one was the Sim fort; this belonged to the Tudu people. There were still other forts; but we have forgotten the names.

In Campa we stayed for ages, and there we were a great people. At that time we were not subordinate to anybody. The "kings" (rulers) were persons of the Kisku sept. The Murmus were from olden times our priests; we call them Murmu Thakur. The Soren were peons; they were fighters. The Hembroms were the nobility, the Marodis were the wealthy class, and the Tudus were drumming the dancing- and the kettle-drums, and they were making all kinds of things of iron. The Baske people were buying and selling (merchants). What special work those belonging to the remaining septs had, we do not remember.

Having settled in Campa they placed Marak buru, the Five-Six and the Jaher era[24] in a sacred grove at the end of the village-street and were worshipping them. The Day-spirit they worshipped at sun-rise every fifth year.

Our ancestors of old have, people say, told, that in olden times, when Ram raja was living, at that time all Kharwar people went with him to Lonka (Ceylon) and helped him to vanquish Rabona raja; for this reason from then on for a very long time we had no fighting or anything of this kind with the Dekos[25]. They were living in the plains and we in the forests and on the hills. But afterwards we got very much fighting with the Dekos; until this day we have no happy relations with them. As soon as we have cleared the jungle in any country, the Dekos come and rob us of it. Still if the Sahibs[26] nowadays did not help them, we should soon drive them to the other side of the Ganges. At the time of the insurrection[27] we had intended to make the Ganges our boundary; but

[823] [114] [778] [829] [671] [175] [669]

[23] It is not possible with any certainty to identify the countries mentioned. Skrefsrud thought that the expression "the country of the seven rivers" might be identified with the present Punjab. Others will identify Cae Campa with the country to the northwest of the present Chota Nagpur. As regards the last mentioned, the same might have reference to two different countries. [24] lit. The Lady of the Sacred Grove. Every Santal village is to have a sacred grove (jaher) in its vicinity, where possible, a part of the original forest, consisting of sal-trees and at least one Mahoa tree. More further on. [25] Deko is the name used by the Santals for a non-Santal of the better class, especially Hindus. A Mohammedan will not be so called, if he is recognized as a Mohammedan. [26] i.e., the European courts. The Santal's ideas of justice are not regulated by written laws. [27] The Santal insurrection of 1855, was not aimed against the Government of the day, but was a misguided attempt to get rid of the money-leaders. The Government naturally had to intervene. This insurrection marks the beginning of a new era for the Santals, according to their own estimation in many ways a beginning of deterioration. The mention of the insurrection here is an antidiluvian.

2; Skrefsrud M-5 (1870-1871) 1942 AW42 Santal AW42

or rice along with them, so that there is no food at home; in spite of this when they come home and no food has been prepared for them, they scold their wives a good deal and even beat them. The poor wife, where is she to get anything with which to prepare food? If they have no paddy or rice, they will drink, making debts. Then in the month of Magh (middle of January to middle of February) the Supdi comes, harasses and threatens them, and carts their paddy bundles away. The wife and children of such a man pass their time in much suffering, as regards food and clothes. From the forest they bring vegetables and different kinds of tubers, cook and eat these. Formerly they were drinking four, or six, or if it became very much, eight leaf-cups; in this way their strength was not diminished; they were very strong and vigorous like youths. Nowadays, by constantly drinking and by marrying before they are fullgrown, they are becoming puny and stunted in growth; by behaving in such a way, — how should they retain their strength?

c. Stories and folk-tales.

By fairy-stories, folk-tales, and conundrums the Santals feel much enjoyment. In the evening the old men teach them this. The sons and daughters-in-law are occupied in the evening cooking rice and curry, making leaf-cups and leaf-plates, and the old people, husband and wife, tell the children fairy-stories and folk-tales and ask them riddles, to make them happy. If anyone knows a number of fairy-stories and folk-tales, the young people of the village will also gather at his place. And at the threshing-floors, when it is cold and they lie in the huts there, the young men learn much of this. Some people know so many; they tell the others folk-tales the whole night until dawn, still they are not finished, and those who listen do not get tired either; at such times they have no thought at all of dancing; listening they are utterly charmed by joy[3].

Girls and boys mostly learn riddles, and all day long they ask each other such. The young men learn more fairy-stories and folk-tales; even if girls learn the same, they will only get enough courage to let this be known in the presence of people when they have reached the age of old women. The folk-tales are especially about jackals; the fairy-stories are about kings and landlords and about different kinds of people, and the riddles are about a thousand different matters. When they start a riddle, they say: "A riddle, kite, kite", thereupon they give out the riddle[4].

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[3] The Santals have a very large number of folk-tales and stories. The present writer has collected several hundreds. Ten such tales have been published in the Publications of the Indian Institute of the Royal Frederik University, Kristiania 1914, and 93 other tales by Institutet for Sammenlignende Kulturforskning (Santal Folk Tales, vol. I to III, Oslo 1935, 1937, and 1939). A few have also been published in a similar way by the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta. The manuscript of several hundreds, all written down for me by Santal men and women, is now in the University Library, Oslo. [4] See P. O. Bodding, Santal Riddles. Witchcraft among the Santals. Oslo Etnografiske Museums Skrifter, vol. II, nos. 1-2. Oslo 1940.

38 Mukherjea Vol. Y-4,5 (c.a. 1933-1939) 1962
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PREFACE TO THE 1st EDITION

This monograph embodies the results of my investigations 128
specially in Mayurbhanj and the Santal Parganas and is
based on the discovery of new materials regarding the ethnic
life of the Santals. As will appear from the "Acknowledge- 122
ments" that follow, I had to study the published accounts
available, note them when necessary or comment upon them
in course of my account. I am grateful to the anthropological
scholars of the past in stimulating my interest and inspiring
me to undertake personal field-work. And how far this ven-
ture, has contributed to the advancement of knowledge, is a
matter for the world of arts and letters to judge.

In a reminiscent mood, I recall that it was about the year 114
1933 when I was a practising lawyer at Dumka, Santal Par- 122
ganas, my friend late Anandi Nath Sen Gupta, Pleader, in
course of a casual conversation, infected me with a taste for
the study of Santal life. Then I contributed a number of arti-
cles to the leading Indian journals. My contributions attracted
the kind attention of Sri K. C. Neogy, the Dewan of Mayur-
bhanj State, which has a large Santal population. In course
of some correspondence with him, I wondered whether the
state was interested in a smallish volume on the tribe. In
reply, Sri K. C. Neogy wrote me in January 1938, from which
I quote the following:

"I am glad that you are thinking of bringing out a com-
prehensive book on the Santals, incorporating your past
writings on the subject. As you know we have a very large
Santal population in Mayurbhanj, and would like to en-
courage a regular ethnological and anthropological survey of
this as well as other aboriginal tribes inhabiting this state.
I am sure the general features of Santal life are more or less
uniform throughout the country, but at the same time I am
almost sure that there are local variations as well. It is not
for me to make any definite suggestion that you should post-

114 122 pone your proposed publication pending a local study of the Santals here, though I should very much like to see some local colour and background introduced in your work. In case, however, you feel interested in undertaking a study of our Santal population on the spot, I shall arrange for requisite facilities in that matter."

According to his assurance, the Mayurbhanj state gave me all possible facilities for a regular ethnological and anthro- 114 pological survey of its Santal population. In my field-work, I worked under the direction of late Rai Bahadur Sarat Chandra Roy of Ranchi and I had the proud privilege of [128] looking upon him as my *guru*. He revised my Ms., suggested additions and even saw some of the proof-sheets. But before he could write the "Foreword" he had promised, Death removed the doyen of Indian anthropological scholars.

In the absence of the Foreword, I quote below his letters to me and Sri K. C. Neogy Dewan, containing his opinion on my monograph:—

MAN IN INDIA

Ranchi (India).

My dear Charu Babu,

I enclose the desired letter for Mr Neogy. You may make use of it in any way you think. I trust you are doing quite well. I wish you every success in your literary ventures. I shall inform you before I go to Calcutta and shall be glad to have a report from you then (from you personally, if possible) of the progress your work is making. With best wishes.

Yours sincerely,
Sd. Sarat Chandra Roy.

(Enclosure)

Ranchi,
The 11th. Nov. 1939.

My dear Mr. Neogy,

I have been asked by Mr. Charulal Mukherjea to inform you what I think of the work he has been doing among the Santals of Mayurbhanj; and so I write this with great pleasure.

[illegible] Mukherjea O. Y-[illegible] (c.c. 1933-1939) 1962
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([illegible])

I have carefully read every page of the typescript of a monograph on the Santals prepared by him, and found it to be a work of real merit. Though it deals particularly with the Santals of Mayurbhanj state, he also touches upon some aspects of Santal culture that he observed among the Santals of Santal Parganas. This adds to the value of the book for purposes of comparative study. 114

I have no doubt that the book, when published, will supply a long-felt want. The Santals are one of the most important aboriginal tribes of India and it is unfortunate that until now no reliable book on Santal ethnology has been published in English. As a student of Indian ethnology, I am eagerly looking forward to the publication of Mr. Mukherjea's monograph under the auspices of the enlightened ruler of Mayurbhanj whose patronage of science and literature is well-known. [122]

K. C. Neogy, Esq. M.A., B.L.
Dewan, Mayurbhanj State

Yours sincerely
Sd. Sarat-Chandra Roy.

But I must not fail to note the rest who helped me by their advice and guidance. Prominent among those who encouraged me were Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerji, Dr. Girindra Sekhar Bose, Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji, Prof. Nripendra Chandra Banerji, Prof. Rangin Haldar, Prof. Girija Sankar Bhattacharya. Dr. Chatterji helped me out of an uncomfortable position by helping us to evolve alternative diacritical marks for the romanisation of Santali and Dr. Bose very kindly revised the appendix on sex-life and helped me with his suggestions. My friend, Mr. Subodh Roy of Chinsura relieved me by revising the proofs and my nephew, Sm. Haradhan Banerji, artist, helped me with the sketches on Santal material culture. My grateful thanks to them for their valuable help. 128

Last but not the least, I must acknowledge my debt of gratitude to my Santal friends of Dumka and Mayurbhanj. Mr. R. Kisku Rapaz, Asst. Headmaster, Dumka Zilla School, Mr. Bodhraj Manjhi of Dumka, Mr. Raghunath Manjhi, teacher. 000

Jt Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (e.a. 1933-1939) 1942
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115 teacher, Rairangpur, Mr. Niranjan Manjhi of Baripada
128 helped me in the translation and transliteration of Santal folk-songs. The late Mr Jadabendra Manjhi of the
[122] State Secretariat, Baripada, deputed by the state to help me in my studies, narrated to me many of the folk-tales incorporated in the book. It is sad to remember that he could
115 not see the work in print. Educated Santals of Rairangpur, Mayurbhanj, Messrs. Sanira Charan Manjhi, Sundar Mohan Manjhi, and Sunaram Soren threw much light on their manners and customs. Hosts of other names including those of Messrs. Ananta Manjhi, Routrai Manjhi Matu Manjhi and Surendra Manjhi of Baripada crowd round my memory and to those unnamed, I offer my cordial thanks.

122 It is difficult to complete the list of my helpers without a
• 114 further reference to the Mayurbhanj State. The present Dewan Major B. P. Pande and his Secretary, Mr. Rajaeopalam gave me facilities of Santal studies during my last trip to Mayur-
[128] bhanj. The blocks of some of the illustrations were lent by the state and the hospitality of Mayurbhanj made my several visits there comfortable and worthwhile.

128 In conclusion, I would sincerely thank Sj. Nibaran Chandra Ghatak, teacher, Chinsura, my students Sms. Sisir Kumar De, B.Sc., Bipadbhanjan Sen, Purna Chandra Chatterjea, Tara Prasad Mukherji and Subodh Chandra Ganguly in connexion with the preparation of the Mss. together with the Index.

Charulal Mukherjea
Dumka, Santal Parganas.

N. B. Slightly abridged.
C.M.

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[P.xiii]

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In the preparation of this monograph on the Santals, apart from my own investigations, I had to study the extant literature on the tribe. There is no gainsaying the fact they are meagre and scrappy and the very want of a comprehensive account of the tribe led me to undertake the spade work. The account that follows is rough and when I place side by side the works of Rai Bahadur S. C. Roy on the other Munda tribes, I feel the vastness of the problem before me. Should circumstances so allow, I intend to take up a comparative study of the Bengal Santals with their Bihar and Orissa brethren. This was a special desire of Rai Bahadur S. C. Roy. But the difficulties of a student of ethnology with but slender financial resources, cut off from a direct touch with the University, separated from Santal areas except during vacations, can better be imagined than described. 122 114

Moreover, the extant works are rare books. These are not lent out by the Libraries and I remember how I had to wait more than six months before I could read "The Baiga" of Father Elwin, which Rai Bahadur S. C. Roy advised me to make the basis of my enquiry on the sex-life of the Santals. 122 127

The books I used for my Santal studies, were the following :—

W. W. Hunter's Statistical Account of Santal Parganas. (Col. Dalton's account). Vol. XIV (1877).

Bengal Districts Gazetteer, Santal Parganas (Vol. XXII).

E. G. Man, Sonthalia and the Sonthals.

Introduction to the Grammar of Santali Language, Rev. L. O. Skrefsrud (Published from Benares, 1875)

Report of the condition of the Santhals in the districts of Birbhum, Bankura, Midnapore and North Balasore, By M. C. MacAlpin, I.C.S. (1909).

Santali-English, English-Santali Dictionary, Dr. Campbell.

Santali Dictionary, Rev. Dr. Bodding

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In saying so he relies on the linguistic affinities between the Mundà-languages and those of the Mon-Khmers of Burma and Khasis of Assam.

Now let us examine the objections against these various contending claims. Risley, in his *People of India*,[1] commenting on the first theory says, "Their low stature, black skin, long heads, broad noses and relatively long forearm" confirmed for a time Huxley's hypothesis that they are related to the aborigines of Australia. Linguistic affinities plus Sclater's hypothesis of a submerged continent of Lemuria have been cited in support. But Sir William Turner's comparative study of Australian, and what he calls, Dravidian crania, has thrown much doubt on the view. Similarly, "the facts which cast doubt on the Australian affinities of the Dravidians, refute the hasty opinion which seeks to associate them with the tiny, broad-headed, and wooly-haired Negritos of the Andamans and the Philippines."

Rai Bahadur S. C. Roy, in his "*The Mundàs and their Country*", does not subscribe to the theory that a widely diffused race which was capable of imposing its culture and language on a number of other people, could at all be blotted out from the face of the earth.

1. Ref. *People of India*, S. H. Risley, page 46.

3t Mukherjea D. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
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114 The theory of a north-eastern entry of the Muṇḍà tribes speaking Muṇḍàri and other dialects and of the Dravidians of Tamil-speaking family by the north-western passes, and their subsequent admixture, is also assailed by Risley. He criticises the basis of the theory as "obscure" and says that its account of the Dravidians seems to rest upon a supposed affinity between the Brahui dialect of Beluchisthan and the languages of Southern India; while the hypothesis of the north-eastern origin of the Muṇḍà-tribes depends on the fancied recognition of Mongolian characteristics among the people of Chotanagpur. Risley bases his objections on the ground that the distinction between Muṇḍà-tribes and Dravidians is purely linguistic and does not correspond to any difference of physical type. Secondly, taking into consideration the extreme improbability that a large body of very black and extremely long-headed types should have come from one region of the earth which is peopled exclusively by people of broad heads and yellow complexion, he dismisses the theory of a trans-Himalayan origin of the Dravidians. Lastly, considering the geographical distribution, the marked uniformity of physical characters among the more primitive members of the group, their animistic religion, their distinctive languages, their stone monuments and their retention of a primitive system of totemism, he concludes that the

3: Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ex. 1933-1939) 1962
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Mundà-tribes are the earliest inhabitants of India of whom we have any knowledge. 174 174

The foregoing is a peep into the earliest chapters of Indian history to find materials to construct a rational hypothesis as regards the possible origins of the Mundà-tribes. References from Sanskrit texts could be given, but we can perhaps state without fear of contradiction that no scientific data have as yet been unearthed by the investigators as may enable them to frame a scientifically tenable theory. One can easily form vague surmises on the basis of still more vague materials furnished by the early Aryan myths and Puranic traditions; but they leave the serious student of social history wondering if he is not really undergoing the labours of Sisyphus. So it is that historians take shelter under mystifying metaphors when they draw the "veil of obscurity" over the earliest epochs of Indian history. Others, the more assiduous, traverse all the quagmire and build from time to time, interesting theories to be pulled down again by later investigators like a house of cards. But still the search goes on.

We make no apology, therefore, to present before the reader at this stage an idea of the Santal theory of Creation and their migration from their original seat, for what it is worth. 773

We need hardly add that these are oral traditions, as the Santals have no written script of their 773 212 184

N Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (e.a. 1933-1939) 1942
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539 Menak' menak' Harata ho,
Menak' menak' buru dander ho.
Onareliñ tahèⁿkana àliñ do,
Onareliñ sorolen.

This may be roughly translated as follows:—

For seven days, nights seven,
it rained fire and fire.
For seven days and nights seven,
rained water in floods.
O Ye men! Where ye then?
Where did you shelter take?

The reply sings:—

Behold there is a mountain called Harata,
Behold there is a cave therein, where we hid.
And therein, therein we escaped unhurt.

173 At Harata,[1] a new generation sprang up, a race of good men and women. And in course of time they multiplied in large numbers. Then they migrated to Sasañ beda, the plain of turmeric. Here [614] they separated into five more clans than they did at Hihiri Pipiri, viz. Baske, Besra, Pàuuria, Còuṛèⁿ[2] and Bedea (now extinct). So altogether, like the Israelites there were now twelve clans of the Santals.

1. Risley spells the name as Hara.
2. The spelling adopted by Risley is "Chore". The [114] [104] Mayurbhanj Census report (1931) p. 192 Vol. 1 spells it as "Chane" but the Santals were heard to pronounce it in a manner more akin to Risley's transliteration of the name.

B Mukherjea O. Y-1,5 (c.a. 1953-1959) 1962
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Here the Santals became the tenants of the king of Sikhàr but we hear that the Dekos seized their lands and property and drove them away. It is at Sikhàr that the Santals learnt how to observe the *Chatapirib*[1] (one of Santal festivals). From Sikhàr some of the Santals came to Tundi near Dhanbad.

The Santals regard stability as the biggest of their tribal problems. Their foretathers exhorted upon them not to cross the river Ajoy, but they had to go against their wishes for the sake of bread. And in course of time they have found themselves in the Santal Parganas. With a characteristic naivete, the Santals say that like the caterpillars

But the people would not change their religion, so they left their chief to rule over the Hindus, and wandered on to the Santal Parganas where they are settled now."

People of India, Ayy. VIII, pages clviii-clix. Risley has some reflections on the origin of the name "Santal." He says that according to Mr. Skrefsrud it is a corruption from "Saontar" and was adopted by them after their sojourn for several generations in the country about Saont in Malharpur. Before they went to Saont they were said to have been called Khirwar, the root of which, *khàr* is a variant of *hàr*, 'man', the name which all Santals use among themselves. Col. Dalton expressed a doubt whether the name of the place may not have been taken from the tribe, "a doubt strengthened by the discovery of a small tribe of Saonts in Surguja and Keonjhar." Risley does not think the point of importance as the Santal always now calls himself "manjhi."

1. Chata-pirib = Observed in Mayurbhanj on the 12th day (Dwadasi) before the Bhadra Purnima (full-moon in the month of Bhadra, Aug.-Sept).

S Mukherjea O. Y 4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1942
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167 they are advancing, grazing and eating. But still they have not yet been extinguished from the face of the earth. They do not know where they will go next. Some have crossed the Ganges. It is not known why Thàkur (*the Creator*) is punishing them in this way.

128 114 We consider that it will be instructive at this stage to refer to the traditions as collected and commented upon by the previous antiquarians so that our story of Santal genesis and migration may be examined in the light of these.

114 167 Mr. E. G. Man, one of the earliest writers on the Santals,[1] quoting the opinion of Mr. Sutherland, Joint Magistrate of Monghyr, (1817) refers to the "Sonthars who emigrate (in the Santal Parganas) from the Beerbhoom and Ramghar district, and even from the Nagpur territory." An old [173] Santal told him that they came from "Chai Jumpa" in the Nagpur district, and their migrations were due to the oppressions of a "Mahadeo Singh". [101] They first called themselves "Shaitals" which was gradually corrupted into "Sonthars." Now they are known as Santals. Some of them say that they were originally "Kerwars."

[113] 1. Ref. *Sonthalia and the Sonthals*, E. G. Man, page 11.

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
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Man has some ingenious reflections on the antiquities of the tribe when he hazards the opinion that Greek elements were infused into the Santals while at Rajmahal after Alexander's conquests in India.[1] His book proves a very interesting reading when we find him quoting the opinion of a gentleman who suggested a resemblance between Santal and Jewish myths and rituals. A second person told Man that the Santals reminded him of the Romans, while a third, that he thought that the tribe had borrowed some ideas from the Egyptians. "All were," says Man, "prepared to agree as to their similarity with the ancients, but each made a different comparison." Faced with this jigsaw puzzle and taking into account the Biblical similarities in the story of Ṭhàkur Jiu's punishment of the tribe by sending fire and rain while at Khòj kaman, he takes the myth to be a "garbled account of the flood," and concludes that either the traditions of all these ancients were derived from the same source or the Santals were connected with the above-named tribes at some period of their existence.

The next account deserving mention is given by Rev. L. O. Skrefsrud.[2] The version is remarkably

1. Ref. *Sonthalia and the Sonthals*, E. G. Man pp. 59-63.

2. Ref. *Grammar of the Santali language*, Rev. L. O. Skrefsrud, Published from Benares 1873.

3i Mukherjea O. Y-4, 8 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
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114 174 similar to the tradition as narrated by us, and takes the reader through the Santal sojourn at Hihiri Pipiri, Sasan beda, Khòj kaman, Hara or Harata and Jàrpi. But what is most important in the version is that the author has sought to identify, with query marks of course, the mythical seats with modern geographical names. Thus he seems to think that Aere may be Iran, Kaende may be Kandahar, Cae might refer to the Chinic Tartary and the fabled Campa of Santal myth, the land of seven rivers with Sapta Sind, the present Punjab, where the early Santals dwelt for long, and where their institutions took rise, and lastly Sikhàr to be the modern Hazaribagh district. The other point to note is that this account mentions some rivers among which are the Maha nàni, Sinjo nàni, Giru nàni, the Sura nàni and the Gua nàni by whose side the immigrants successively lived.

We should mention here that the foregoing traditional story tallied in essential particulars with that told by the Santals of Mayurbhanj during our investigations there and we have noted the minor differences in the foot-notes.

184 976 It is, however, very interesting to note the major variations with the traditions as noted by "Horkoren Mare Hapramko Reak' Katha" from that obtaining in Mayurbhanj. In the first place, all the members of a conference of the old Santals insisted on

31 Mukherjee O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
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added five more. The Mayurbhanj Santals did not agree with this, although it tallies with the account of Risley.[1] They said that all the clans were formed together and narrated a story to support their contention. According to them Pilcu Haram and Pilcu-Budhi had twelve sons. All of them went for a hunt and after returning, some asked their mother for water, others for food. The mother saw that each of her sons had brought a particular article along with him. Henceforth, their respective clans were formed accordingly. Thus the son who had brought home a "muruṁ," (*a horn-less animal, Nilgae or blue cow, Portax picta*) came to be known as Murmu. Màṁḍi was named so because he ate the husks of corn, Hansdak' because he had killed a wild duck. The name Ṭuḍu came from the wild-fowl, Besra from wild-buffalo, Pàṅuria (*called Copeyar in Mayurbhanj*) from wild-pigeons, Gòndowar from dàṇḍkà-hako, a kind of fish, and Còṇṛèn from a lizard. Of the rest *Baske* derived his name from the *baske*[2] (fermented rice) he had eaten and Hèmbròm, because of a fruit he had brought (said to be *tiril*, Oriya *kendu*, a fruit like mangosten). No explanation was forthcoming as to how the Kiskus and Sòrèns

1. Risley, *People of India*, App. VII, page clix.

2. Baske = left over from the previous meal, fusty, stale, unfinished. (Campbell's dictionary).

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derived their names. About them, the Mayurbhanj Santals added that Kisku did not bring anything, while returning from hunt. He was the eldest, so he was known as Kisku and was their tribal chief, while Sòrèn became his orderly. Gòndwar did not go to the hunt at all, so he was considered as the worst of all the clans.

Risley does not think that the story of the wandering of the Santals deserves serious consideration "neither as a record of actual wandering, nor as an example of the working of the myth-making faculty."[1] Considering how from the same data Mr. Skrefsrud tried to prove that the Santals came from the North-west and Col. Dalton from Assam, he concludes that both the hypotheses are untenable. Continuing he says,[2] "If, however, the legends of the Santals are regarded as accounts of recent migrations, their general purport will be found to be fairly in accord with actual facts. Without pressing the conjecture mentioned above, that Ahiri pipri may be no other than pargana Ahuri in the north-west of Hazaribagh district, it is clear that a large and important Santal colony was once settled in the parganas Chai and Champa in the same district. A tradition is noticed by Col. Dalton of an old fort in Chai occupied by

1. Risley, *People of India*, App. vii, p. clix.
2. Risley, *People of India*, App. viii, p. clix.

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114 one Jaura, a Santal Raja, who destroyed himself and
173 his family on hearing the approach of a Muhamma-
179 dan army under Sayid Ibrahim Ali alias Malik Baya,
712 a general of Muhammad Tughlak's who died in 1353. This tradition, so far as it refers to the existence of a Santal fort in Chai Champa, is to some extent corroborated by the following passage from the legends of the southern Santals collected by the Rev. J. Phillips and published in Appendix G to Annals of Rural Bengal ed 1868: "Dwelling there (in Chai Champa) they greatly multiplied. There were two gates, the Ahin gate and the Bahini gate, to the fort of Chai Champa." If, moreover, the date of the taking of this fort by Ibrahim Ali were assumed to be about 1340 A.D., the subsequent migrations of which the tribal legends speak would fill up the time intervening between the departure of the Santals from Chai Champa and their settlement in the present Santal
174 Parganas. Speaking generally, these recent migra-
173 tions have been to the east, which is the direction
114 they might *prima facie* have been expected to follow. The earlier settlements which the Santal traditions speak of, those in Ahiri Pipri and Chai Champa, lie on the north-western frontier of the table-land of Hazaribagh and in the direct line of advance of the numerous Hindu immigrants from Bihar. That the influx of the Hindus has in fact driven the Santals east-ward is beyond doubt, and the line which they

3: Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
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are known to have followed in their retreat corresponds on the whole with that attributed to them in their tribal legends."

Rev. P. O. Bodding[1] however is inclined to give due weight to the traditional origin of the Santals. Summing up the whole position he opines that the Cae and Campa of Santal myths are to be found in Hazaribagh and on the Chotanagpur plateau, where they lived about 600 years ago, and gives it as his conclusion that a study of Santal traditions and their language makes it likely that they reached this place from the west (south-west); and it is not improbable that about two thousand years ago they were on both sides of the Ganges west of Benares.

We would conclude this chapter with a reference to the myths of the other Munḍà tribes to see if any side-light may be obtained on the early history of the Santals. Now, speaking generally, there is a good deal of resemblance between the traditions of the Munḍàs, the Santals and the Kharias, which makes the conclusion irresistible that they belong to the same stock. We have seen that the Santals say that upto the period the people were at Campa,[2] the

1. *Bengal District Gazetteers*, Santal Parganas, Vol. XXII, pp. 92-95.

2. Campa = According to S. C. Roy, (p. 100, footnote) Campa was also the old name of Bhagalpur and its political boundary "may be stated as extending from

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1902
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17 Santals, Birhòrs, Muṇḍàs and Kurbmis were known under the generic name of Kharwars. And we hear that while the Kurbmis adopted Hindu customs, the Muṇḍàs were gradually separated. Both the Santals and the Muṇḍàs have legends connected with Bhagalpur, in so far as it is probably indentical with Campa or Campa-puri, near Bhagalpur, once the capital of Lomapada of the Ramayana and Karna of the Mahabharata.[1] A tradition of the place linking it with Mandar Pahar of Muṇḍà myths, a building of stone attributed to Raja Kola or Chola, the probability that Colgong or Koholgram may point to a former settlement of the Pre-Dravidians, all raise a strong presumption that it was a seat of the Muṇḍàs in some period of Indian history, when they lived side by side with the Santals. Similarly, Khàiri gaṛ of Santal

[103] [114] Lekhiterai to Rajmahal on the Ganges, and from the Paresnath hill along Damudar river to Kalna on the Bhagirathi." Cunningham's "Ancient Geography of India" p. 478. Colonel Dalton (*Ethnology of Bengal*, page 211) identifies Khairagrah and Chai Champa of Santal tradition with places in the Hazaribagh district. But it seems more probable that these names were given by the Santals to places in the Hazaribagh district after the names of their former homes in the north and west. (At p. 219, however, Col. Dalton speaking about the Beer-hors, says that according to tradition they came to Hazaribagh district from Khairagarh (in the Kaimur hills). Ref. ***The Muṇḍàs and their country.***

1. Ref. ***The Muṇḍàs and their country***, Rai Bahadur S. C. Roy, p. 99.

3i Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
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what Hunter calls, "the advance guard of the hill system of the central India Plateau." Midnapur resembles Bankura more or less in topography; but it is not so hilly. It has its laterite soil, mòhua and sal trees,—a characteristic back-ground inseparable from the Santals.

Distributed throughout this wide area live the Santal, a man of medium size but muscular and strong, with a complexion varying from light-brown to an ebony colour, almost beardless and his ox-eyed, merry women-folk. The physical features that distinguish them from the rest of the population are that they have a round outline and look rather stout. They have, what is called by Col. Dalton, "a blubbery style of face," noses broad with a depressed bridge, and hair black, straight, coarse and curly. The mouth is a large one and the lips thick and projecting; "the zygomatic arches prominent, while the proportions of the skull, approaching the dolichocephalic type, conclusively refute the hypothesis of their Mongolian descent."[1]

Although the theory of Mongolian descent of the Santal is no longer tenable, it is worth noting that faces of a Mongoloid type are sometimes seen amongst them. Rev. Bodding has seen "spots in the pigment of the skin of Santal children, which,

1 Ref. Risley, *People of India*, App. VIII, p. clvii.

31 Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
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The Hindu "Kamar" does work for them, the "Kumhars" make their pots and plates, the "Tantis" weave their clothes and some other depressed class Hindus mostly live within their localities. The influence of the Hindus living nearby saturates the thoughts and ideas of the Santals, and when we remember that ethnologically many of these Hindus were aboriginals in origin, we can find out the reasons why many Santals are really anxious to describe themselves as Hindus like their neighbours. In their rural settlements, one can find the Santals joining the worship of the Hindu gods and goddesses like Durga, Kali and Mahadev. Like the rest of the Hindus, they salute these deities and the entire tribe dance and amuse themselves during these ceremonies.

177 [464] 177 771

Population

A recent worker on the Tribal Demography in India[1] regrets that the data on the tribals are the most inaccurate of all gathered together in Census reports. The net effect, he says, is to understate the number of tribals and correspondingly to overstate the number of other groups.

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I. Singh, in his *Development and Adibasis*, in Asian Labour, Vol. 1, No. 4 (Jan. 1950) says, "Adibasis... number not less than 30 millions accord-

1 *Tribal Demography in India* by C. B. Mamoria, p. 24. [113]

3: Mukherjea O. Y-4, 8 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
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114 ing to the verdict of the scientists at the last session of the Indian Science Congress." He calls it "unreliable," and says, "it would be nearer truth to say that ethnically, tribal numbers would be four times what is shown in the Census."

162 The most important tribes, according to the Census of 1951, are Gond—1,232,886; Santal—28,11,578, Bhil – 1,160,299: Oraon – 6,44,042: Khond – 280,561: Munda – 5,85,211.

The total number of scheduled tribes, according to the Census of 1951 stands at 19·11 millions. So it has been computed that out of 1000 Indians, 54 belong to the tribal communities.

This may be usefully compared with the previous population figures. According to the Census of 1931, the aboriginal population of India numbered 22½ millions in round numbers and formed 6½ p.c of the total Indian population. Then also, the Gonds stood first in number, the Santals second and the Bhils third.

The total number of Santals in (undivided) India, in 1941 has been tabulated by Rev. J. Gausdal[1] to be 2,902,266 (N.B. He gives his own estimate of Assam and Nepal figures).

In 1931, they numbered 2,508,789 from 2,265,282 in 1921. As has been already stated

1 *Journal of the Asiatic Society*, Science, Vol. XIX, p. 4.

3t Mukherjee O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
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[P.63]

CHAPTER III

ECONOMIC LIFE

The Santal traditions are silent as to whether Thàkur Jiu, after Man's first lapse at Khòj kaman, pronounced a curse on them that out of the sweat of their brow shall they earn their bread as on their Biblical prototype, but had He done so, it would have thrown some light on the strenuous struggle for existence of the Santal in this mundane world. Food, drink, shelter and the luxury of a fire have remained to this day as objects of man's instinctive worldly cravings, and Santals though no exception to the general rule, and while feeling the pinch like others, try to hide everything under a smile.

In this chapter, we propose to give the reader some idea of the material culture of the Santal on the basis of our enquiries in a number of villages in the state of Mayurbhanj[1].

The first item in the daily routine of the men is to rise from their sleep with the first grey of morning. They then have a wash and may indulge in a smoke of "pungis" (*a home-made cigarette made of sal-leaves*). Now their fields call them, and on they

[1] The villages visited were Katsirsi, Andharia, Tursibani, Tentulbati (Muruda) and Tikaripara (Rairangpur).

3s Mukherjea O, Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
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Jòmak' ñunyak' bòeha bànuk' taleya,
Mènt' ñèpèl bòeha ahajibà.
Akal kèdae gateñ sāwanek'edae
Ità ràmu gateñ, bale ñawana,
Sanam hòpòniñko ḍiṅgàṛ cabayen.

(Translation)

Welcome, welcome! O friends dear!
(We have) neither food nor drink to offer.
But we offer you our greetings,
(It matters little whether) the harvest
failed or it was in plenty;
For want of seeds (and consequent want
of food)
All my sons have nothing of their own.

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Out to trace variations in Mayurbhanj from the Santals in the Santal Parganas, we were somewhat pleased to see that their houses were better built and more commodious, but the inner economic structure told the self-same tale as in the folk-song.

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[114]
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We selected some villages at random and questioned the Santals (without claiming for ourselves the functions of the economic surveyor) on the point. But they replied, "We are very poor. Our average

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agricultural income is from Rs. 5 to 6 per month. Those more industrious supplement it by working as day labourers which may bring them Rs. 3 more. But about half of the population are indebted to

3a Mukherjea C. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1937) 1902
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	Traditional	Col. Dalton	Dr. Campbell	Risley	Man	Rev. Skrefsrud	The author
1.	Hansdak'	Handsa	Hansdak'	Hansdak'	Hansda	Hasdak'	Hansdak'
2.	Murmu	Murma	Murmu	Murmu	Marmoring Murmu	Murmu	Murmu
3.	Kisku	Kisku	Kisku	Kisku	Kisku	Kisku	Kisku
4.	Hèmbròm	Hemrow	Hèmbróm	Hèmbròm	Hèmròm	Hemrom	Hèmbròm
5.	Màrṇḍi	Marlí (?)	Màrṇḍi	Marndi	Mardi	Mandri	Màṛṇḍi
6.	Sòrèn	Saran	Sòrèn	Saren	Soren	Soren	Sòrèn
7.	Ṭudu	Túdi	Ṭuḍu	Tudu	Tudu	Tudu	Ṭuḍu
8.	Baske	Baski	Baske	Baske	Baski	Baske	Baskę
9.	Besra	Besera	Besra	Besra	Bisra Besra	Besra	Besra
10.	Pàunria	Nil	Pàurià Pàulia	Pauria	Nil	Paoria	Pàunria
11.	Còṇṭèn	Chorai	Còṇṭèn	Chore	Nil	Chore	Còṇṭen
12.	Bedea	Nil Karwar	Nil	Bedea	Nil Kedoar (?)	Nil	Nil Gòndwar

31 Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
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in Santali means a goose, and "dak'" means water. "Hèmbròm" means betel-nut, "Murmu" means Murum jel, the Nil gae, or blue cow, (Portax pictu), "Màrṇḍi," a weed of rice cultivation (*Ischaemum rugosum*, Salisb.) and "Sòrèn," the constellation of Pleiades (sòrènko). We shall have occasion to discuss these meanings further in course of the forthcoming pages. It ought to be mentioned, however, that Risley in his *Tribes and Castes of Bengal* (Vol. II, page 125) gives the following meanings of the Santal clan-names:| Bedea (*Sheep?*), Besra (*Hawk*), Hemrom, Hembram (*Betel-palm*), Marndi (*Grass*), Murmu (*Nil gai*) and Soren (*Constellation of Pleiades*). About the rest he is silent. Rev. P. O. Bodding in his *Santali to English Dictionary* does not give the meanings of the clan-names particularly, but his note on the origin of the Besras is worth quoting. "The story that they are despised because they formerly were licentious is probably due to the word "bèsròm" (*obstinate, licentious*) but this word is much younger than the name of the sept."

[114]

Several points in the comparative list given above require to be elucidated. Col. Dalton, while maintaining that the tribes number twelve, omits the twelfth viz. *Bedea*, which is thought to be an extinct branch according to almost all the authorities. Similarly, Dr. Campbell gives eleven names, adding that one has been lost.

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legendary migrations as we have already seen in the first chapter; and it was only at Campa that the *Kurmis* adopted Hindu customs and manners. Therefore, there is a strong presumption that *Bedeas* who call themselves *Chot Kurmi*, might have once belonged to the Santal fold.

Coming to Man's list of Santal tribes, we find that he sticks to the traditional number twelve; but makes up the deficiency by referring to *Besras* and *Murmus* twice, under different spellings. Thus *Besras* pass also as *Bisras* and *Murmu* comes again as *Marmoring*. This mistake perhaps occurred in this way. Presumably Man asked a Santal about his clan and the man replied, "Murmu iñ." (*I am a Murmu.*) And from this he noted down the name of the tribe as "*Marmoring*".

There is general agreement about the names of clans (although with different spellings) except about *Bedeas*, *Kharwars* and *Gondwars*. An attempt should be made here to clear the prevailing confusion amongst ethnographers.

Kharwars

We find from Man and Col. Dalton's lists that they mention *Kedoar* and *Karwar* respectively as Santal clans. Presumably they are the same, under different spellings, of what is known as *Kharwars*. We have seen in our story of Santal Genesis and

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
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All these however lead us nowhere. And all that we can guess in the absence of more reliable evidence is that there is no independent clan amongst the Santals bearing the name of *Kharwars* or *Kherwals*, and that perhaps some Santals when questioned by Man and Col. Dalton gave their clan as *Karwar* or *Kedoar* as the alternative of *Kharwars*, the traditional name for Santals, before they came to Saont or Sant in Midnapore.

It should be mentioned here that Risley in his *Tribes and Castes of Bengal*, gives the following equivalent of the general name Santal viz. *Saontar*, *Kharwar*, or *Safa-Hòṛ* and mentions *Kharwars* or *Safa-Hor* as 'sub-tribes' as well, but not as a sept (clan) name. We should add that the very name *Safa-Hòṛ* is not now much understood by the Mayurbhanj Santals. But we have very reliable evidence[1] to say that there was, in 1871, a movement in the Santal Parganas known as the *Kharwar movement* when some Santals declared themselves as *Safa-Hòṛ* (the pure men), after eschewing fowls, pigs and intoxicating liquor, but taking "gañja," (hemp, Canabinis Sativa) and tried to bring it on a line with Hindu practices. It led at a time to some local ferment and had also a political aspect. But beyond

1. Ref. *Dt. Gazetteer*, Santal Parganas, 1910, p. 145.

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
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175 668 614 this we do not know anything and no light is available to assert that *Kharwar* was ever a clan name.

174 101 668 It should, however, be noted here that the Mayurbhanj Census Report, 1931, (Vol. I, p. 215) opines that "the present Santals are the descendants of the section of the tribe who became followers of Bhagirath (the leader of the Kharwar movement)—a Santal who endeavoured to start a movement to turn out the Sahibs and Zemindars out of the country and who was tried for sedition in 1871 and imprisoned at Bhagalpur where he died."

Gòndwars

• 114 614 The Santals of Mayurbhanj when questioned invariably answered that they were twelve clans, but they made no mention of the *Bedea* (supposed to be lost) and made up for the deficiency by mentioning *Gòndwars*. This was remarkable as in no other account do we come across such a name. In course of searching enquiries also we could not meet any *Gòndwar*. [The Mayurbhanj Census Report (1931, Vol. I, p. 192) also mentions the clan.]

614 563 829 The general belief among the Santals is that *Gòndwars* occupy a low position among them as they are supposed to be a cross between *Gònd-Munḍà* and *Santals*. There is in existence in Mayurbhanj a class of "Hansdak's" called "Gòndwar-Hansdak's" and they are considered distinctly low in the esti-

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4. *Hèmbròm*

614 The patronymic of the Hèmbróm clan of the Santals is "Kunàr" or "Hèmbròm Kunàr." An educated Santal explained to us that this clan belonged to the clerical class, but such a job presupposes a written language of which the Santals have none and in the absence of further light, such a clan seems to be doubtful. Rev. Bodding opines that the word "Kunàr" signifies the nobility.

We came across the following sub-clans of the Hèmbròms in Mayurbhanj or had information about them from well-informed Santals.

(i) Nij Hèmbròm.

(ii) Sole Hèmbròm:—"Sole" was explained to be a kind of fish equivalent to the "shoul mach" (a fish) of Bengal.[1] If these Hèmbròms eat "Sole" [1183] fish, they have to undergo ceremonial purification. 614 Here, we ought to mention that the Mayurbhanj • 114 Census Report[2] mentions the twelfth Santal clan as "Salay." We made extensive enquiries about this, what appeared to us, a new clan and had a little conference with some educated and leading Santals, but we came to the conclusion that this new clan

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1. Ref. Dr. Campbell's Santali to English Dictionary, p. 628 where *Sòlè icàk'* is explained as "a large species of Shrimp."

2. Ref. p. 192 *Census Report*, 1931, Mayurbhanj.

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must have been confused with the branch of Sole Hèmbròms. We also met the informant of the tribe to the Census officer and he subsequently agreed with our conclusion. 614 114

(iii) Gua Hèmbròm:—"Gua" means "betel-nut." These Hèmbròms do not eat these totems and according to custom rub the forehead of their brides with some vermilion put on such nuts. 614

(iv) Tursi Hèmbròm:—Nabin Mañjhi, Headman of Chamardahani, Muruda, was emphatic that such a sub-clan exists.

(v) Bareliwèt' Hèmbròm:—"Bare" is thought to refer to "bare dare" (the banyan tree; *Ficus bengalensis*, Roxb.) whereas Liwèt' " means "to droop, to bend." The expression "bareliwèt" will therefore mean "a bending banyan tree." The leaves are taboos to this sub-clan of the Santals, for purposes of eating.

(vi) Paita Hèmbròm:—They are said to wear "paita" (*a sacred thread*) when at ceremonial worship.

(vii) Deobans Hèmbròm:—These people are prohibited from eating *bel* fruit and from burning the wood of the *bel*-tree. (*AEgle Marmelos*).

(viii) Hat Hèmbròm:—Referred to in the Mayurbhanj Census Report. *Hat* was explained to be a kind of tree (Bengali, *Kurchi* or *Kutaja*,

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brothers. So they wanted to "Sòle" (mix) it with rice. And as they mixed, they took another "paris" (sub-clan), namely Sòle Màrṇḍi.

(v) Khandajaha or Khandajagao Màrṇḍi:—They place the weapon (khanda) before the deity while engaged in Jòm Sim puja or propitiating the household deity, "Oṛak' Boṅga."

(vi) Ruth Màrṇḍi:—These Màrṇḍis would not cut or otherwise use the *ruth* tree (*Oriya Panjam*).[1]

(vii) Merachakha Màrṇḍi:—They are so named because they ate first the rice of hàṇḍia (rice-beer). "Mera" means rice, and "chakha" to eat.

(viii) Tarap Màrṇḍi:—Tarap is a tree, called in Oriya, "Charkuli." It is reported that these Màrṇḍis do not cut this tree or eat on its leaves. Others told us that pork is tabooed to this sub-clan and yet others, that they cannot take "mòhua" wine inside their houses according to customary prohibition.

(ix) Sade Màrṇḍi:—It was explained to us that "Sade" means a "hotchpotch of rice and pulse" in Mayurbhanj, and the members of this sub-clan

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1. There is no mention of "ruth" in Campbell's dictionary. Most probably it is the same as *Rot*, a common forest tree, Ougenia Dalbergioides Bl. which probably gives the name to Rot Màrṇḍis.

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614 leaves, she was found to have put in a piece of cloth instead of vegetables or meat inside. Hence, at present they are prohibited from cooking such delicacies.

(v) Salpat Hao Ṭuḍu:—The expression means a species of large red ants inside nests of *sal-leaves*. It is said that in legendary times, the ancestors of this sub-clan killed these ants by pressing them between the leaves.

(vi) Rok' Ṭuḍu' (*Rok'*, to pierce, to perforate):—According to customary practices they are required to seek the help of the uncle to bore the ears of the child during such ceremonies. The child, moreover, should be placed on a stack of paddy.

(vii) Kaḍa Ṭuḍu (*Kaḍa*, buffalo).

(viii) Hāṇḍi Ṭuḍu.

(ix) Saṅge Ṭuḍu.

(x) Aṅgaria Ṭuḍu.

614 Sir H. Risley, in his *People of India* relates some
• 114 interesting stories about the formation of the five
174 additional clans and considering there are variations and supplementary information, we think it worthwhile to acquaint the reader with the tradition as noted by him. According to his version, the tribe "Baske" at first belonged to the Ṭuḍus. But as

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1. This is possibly a short form of Rok' lutur Ṭuḍu.

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they offered their break-fast (*baske*) to the gods while at Campa, they were formed into a separate clan. Besras were so named because of the "immoral behaviour of their eponym, who was called 'Besra,' the licentious one." It agrees with our version in tracing the origin of "Pàuṛia" from the pigeon and "Còṛèn" from the lizard, but adds that on the occasion of a famous tribal hunt, the forefathers of these two clans could not kill any other animal excepting pigeons and lizards, making no mention about the story current in Mayurbhanj we have noted before. Regarding Bedeas, Risley's story says that they were left behind when the Santals went out of Campa. "They had no father, so the story goes, at least the mother of their first ancestor could not say who his father was and for this reason they were deemed of lower rank than the other septs." Continuing he states that this clan is believed to have arisen during the time of Mandò Sin in Campa when the Santals had begun to come in touch with the Hindus. According to some Santals, their father was a Rajput while their mother was a Kisku girl. Risley concludes with the conjecture that the well-known gypsy tribe of Bedeas may be the result of a liaison of a Rajput with a Santal girl, but would not stretch the theory too far as "the mere resemblance of names is a slender foundation for such a hypothesis."

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Supreme Court of the Santals

224 634 692 [196] According to immemorial custom, the Santals join together in an annual hunt (*Lò bir sendra*) on the conclusion of the spring flower-festival, when opportunity is taken to discuss various questions affecting the social and religious problems of the tribe, and to decide the reference cases from the decisions of the *Desh-Pròdhans*.

Here grave social offences necessitating social excommunication and ostracism (*Bitlihà*), (as we shall see in detail very soon) constitute subjects of grave deliberation by the tribe. Such meetings are [211] convened by the circulation of a mysterious notice [184] by means of a knot tied to a rope as in Mayurbhanj, [202] or a branch of *Sal* tree carried from *hat* (market) to *hat* (as in Santal Parganas). About the constitution [114] of this privy-council, Dr. Campbell opines that a person, *Dihri* (the superintendent of the hunt), is also the president of the court which assembles in the evening, but all that our enquiries revealed in Mayurbhanj was that the Pargana, the Desh-Pròdhans of the tribe assisted by the elders called Desh-Panchayet, jointly deliberate together before declaring their verdict.

[184] [178] This ancient institution, called in Santal lore *Sendra bir bichar* (a trial during a hunt at a forest) is almost extinct in Mayurbhanj, as wild games are protected by the State and no question of a tribal hunt

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We see that the eldest babe is given a name after its grand-father. The tribal deities and ancestor-spirits are worshipped to bring good-luck to the baby. Members of the tribe offer it their best wishes, and it grows up. When in the twelfth year, by further magico-religious rites like cicatrization with boys and tattooing with girls, they are protected against further dangers at the hands of the malignant powers in their future life ; and thus the Santals keep away from harm the family, the clan and the tribe as a whole from unforeseen calamities.

MARRIAGE

"O, she is the light of the house," exclaimed a Santal with evident pride, when we asked him as to why they married. The Santals are a very realistic tribe, and they have long ago forestalled the drive of some of the modern totalitarian states against bachelors. They cannot simply understand the proposition as to how a man can go on in a state of single blessedness. So both sexes despise the unhappy wretch and do not hesitate to call the solitary thing "a thief, a witch or 'no man'," exactly as E. G. Man observed about seventy years ago.[1] So even today, bachelors and old maids are few and far between in the Santal tribal area, and

1. Ref. E. G. Man, *Sonthalia and the Sonthals.*

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
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CHAPTER VIII

THE CYCLE OF SANTAL FESTIVALS

The Santals have a number of religious and semi-religious festivals. It seems as if the very heart of the trible beats in unison with the advent of these tribal events, for it is here that the Santal plunges into his primitive herd-life to worship the tribal deities, to sing the advent of the agricultural season, to make merry over a bumper crop and to ward off by magic, the pests that hinder the sweet and even flow of their common life.

In this, they do not distinguish much between the Hindu and the Santal festivals. One sees huge Santal rallies during the *Durga Puja* and the *Kali Puja* of the Hindus, and we shall see in detail how they join in the Hindu *Còrùk Puja* (Hook-swinging festival) and have a version of the festival of their own. In course of the following pages, we propose to discuss the typical Santal festivals as we observed in the Santal Parganas, noting side by side the variations from the customary practices at Mayurbhanj, beginning our survey from the month of Baisakh and ending with Chaitra.[1]

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1. With acknowledgements to Mr. R. Kisku Rapaz and *Hòṛhoròn Mare Haṛṛamko Reak' Katha.*

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Thereafter, a special dish is cooked with meat and rice boiled together. All the Santals then dine at the *Jahèrthan*. But the meat of the fowls offered to Jahèr era and Mönrènko can be eaten by the Naeke (priest) alone.

On the second and third days of the festival, each house-holder sacrifices fowls to Abge Boṅga (the god of the Santal males), Oṛak' Boṅga (the Household deity), the Patriarchs of the tribe and Maraṅ Buru (the Chief Presiding Deity). Songs and dances *en masse* conclude the *Eròk' Sim*, the June sowing festival.

Eròk' Sim, (mentioned also by Dr. Campbell and Risley) is observed all over by the Santals; but at Mayurbhanj, it passes under the more Hinduised name of *Asharia*.

Hàriàṛ Simko (July)[1]

The month of July sees the celebration of the *Hàriàṛ Simko*, when thanks are offered to the gods as the paddy appears green and there are indications of a good crop. A peculiar feature of the ceremonials is that the village deities alone are worshipped on this occasion, but the prayers offered are

1. This is the approximate time for this festival in the Santal Parganas. Risley is, however, disposed to place the *Hàriàṛ Sim* (the feast of the sprouting rice, as he calls it) in September-October (Bhadra).

3: Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
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796 almost identical to the *Erok' Sim*, the June sowing
[782] festival.

That this is an essential Santal festival is corro-
[114] borated both by Risley and Dr. Campbell, but the
[184] Mayurbhanj Santals do not seem to observe it any longer.

796 *Iṛi Gundli Nànwàni* (The Millet Festival—August)
243 This festival is connected with the offering of
782 the first fruits of millet (Iṛi, *Panicum milleceum* ; Gundli, *Panicum frumentaceum*) to the tribal gods of the Santals.

796 The essentials of the festival are that the
793 *Nacke* (priest) after a purificatory ablution
243 goes to the field of a *raiyat* (tenant) where the crop
782 has ripened and harvests as much as he can. Then he goes to the *Jahèrthan*, cleanses it with cow-dung and offers the corn to all the gods of the Holy Grove viz. Jahèr era, Mòṇṛènko, Maraṅ Hòṛ, Gosa*ne* era and Pargana. Next he spills milk and utters the hymn:—

[539] 'We salute you Creator (Bapu Thàkur) and Jahèr era. We offer you the first-fruits of our corn. We shall eat these, but let us have no bowel-complaints or head-ache."

The priest then returns to the village and going to the shrine in the Headman's house offers

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The special feature of the festival is that articles for worship are supplied by the priest himself, and only the male members of the tribe are allowed to eat the meat of the animals sacrificed. The priest then prays to the god *Ianthar* with the following incantations:—

We salute thee Father Creator *Pargana*.
We offer you all these in the name of *Ianthar*;
We pray that whatever we may eat, we may digest.
Let there be no diseases like headache, diarrhoea and bowel-complaints.
And bless our crop in the field, and grain in the barn.
Protect them from rats and other pestilence.

Ianthar (called by Risley *Ianthar puja*) is in effect the offering of the first fruit of low-land paddy, as *Iri Gundli* is of millets. Another name for the festival is *Baihàr Horo* Nanwàni.

In course of our enquiries in Mayurbhanj, many Santals stated that this festival passes under the name of *Maamane*[1] there, as was very clear from the fact

1. One wonders if the name is Mak' *Mònrén* in disguise. It is stated by Dr. Campbell to be a festival observed by the Santals after five years or so when the god "*Mònrènko*" is propitiated with the sacrifice of a white goat. The account in the District Gazeteer of the Santal Parganas considers it "an occasional sacrifice performed as the result of a vow made at a time of great distress", when sacrifices are made to all the national *bongas* in the *labér-than*.

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after offering it to the ancestor-spirits. Thus stimulated, the tribe indulges in a water-carnival, when fluids of sun-dried rice are showered by the men and women on one another, amidst a great hilarity, as they parade up and down the *kulhi* (village-lane). 796

The afternoon witnesses *Khuṇṭau*, as seen in the Santal Parganas, when, mischievous cows and buffaloes are tied to posts and teased with treacle cakes. But an additional interest is provided at Mayurbhanj in the shape of a mask-dance when the Santals impersonate tigers, snakes and elephants. [231] [632] [535]

The programme terminates on the fourth day after a tribal dance from house to house ; and thereafter, the paddy from the *biṛas* prepared to decorate the cattle is stored, and rice-beer brewed from it is reserved to be drunk on a later occasion.

Mòkòr (Sakrat[1] Mid-January.)

The Santals of Mayurbhanj observe a ceremony on the last day of *Pous* (mid-January) along with

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1 Dr. Campbell in his *Santali to English Dictionary*, while explaining *Sakrat Pörŏb* says that it is a festival observed on the *last three days of the Hindu year*, (Italics are ours), making it, peasumably refer to an equivalent of Bengali *Chaitra Sankranti*. Most probably he is mistaken. Our version is also corroborated by Rev. Bodding who says, "Close upon Sohrae comes Sàkrat which is held on the last day of the month of *Paus*." (Dt. Gazetteer, Santal Parganas, 1910, page 128). 796 114

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4, 6 (ca. 1933-1939) 1902
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776 [179] Deity with the Hindu idea in the Upanishads, whereas the Christian Santals will attribute to him Biblical ideas. One thing however is clear. The Santal does not yet bother very much about the Supreme Deity, as he is too good to interfere with men, and is a passive deity after all. There are others, who identify Ṭhàkur Jiu of the traditions with Siñ Boñga, the Sun-god, worshipped every tenth year by the Santals; but the concept of Supreme Deity can only, with difficulty, be associated with him.

[114] Risley doubts whether a Hindu name "Ṭhàkur" can form a part of the original system of Santals, and his exercise of supreme powers leads him (Risley) to associate the deity with a later stage of theological development. But when everything is said, the fact remains that the Santal of the modern times is not a fetish-worshipper and whether his present belief is borrowed from Hinduism or not, it cannot be dogmatically asserted any more that the Santal has no God, the Creator, Preserver and Destroyer in his pantheon.

Village Spirits

The Santals have several village spirits, whom they worship during all public festivals. They are supposed to preside over particular rural areas in which they live.

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of Kanva while bidding farewell to his foster daughter, Sakuntala. 585 533 539

Hòpòn hòpòn gidrà kuṛi
Sitoñ lòlò din repe, idiekantiñ,
Eho chandoboñga!
Jhipir jhipir dagme, purbarimil hoeme,
Rearayliñgmeho Cando boñga!

(Translation)

My daughter is very young,
You are taking her when the day is hot.
O God, let it rain in drops,
Let the eastern wind blow and make cool (the journey).

Songs of love

As is only natural, a good deal of Santal folk-songs deal with the eternal reaction on men and women regarding matters of the human heart. In the following song, a man thus speaks of his love for a lame girl:— 533 831 [539]

Bururе siñarak' legec' legec' siñarak,'
Jibòn calak' rehoiñ sidgeya,
Natore kuṛi konrse kaṭa kuṛi'
Hiròm cetan rehoiñ agueya.

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1. "Kònrse Kata" is explained in Dr. Campbell's Dictionary as "Side-ways." Many Santals in Mayurbhanj say it means a flower. In that view it will mean as beautiful as a 'Kònrse Kata' flower. [114] [192]

3: Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
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Nephew: Sunum jor dare* buṭare utar setmae boholede
Dakhin setmae jangalede sardiyakat' mandre, mamogo
Potam mamòkin rak'let.

The sense of the above may be given as follows:

Nephew: O uncle, O my uncle, my maternal aunt has become familiarised and taken advantage.

Uncle: You have got, O my nephew, to furnish evidence for this. You shall have to swear by placing your hand on your son's head.

Nephew: Under the shade of a wild fig tree, with head to the north and feet to the south, O my uncle.

They were cooing like wild-wood pigeons.

Human nature being what it is, it cannot be said that amongst the Santals there are no cases of extra-marital love. In the folk-song quoted below, a lad sings of his love for a married girl, who in her turn replies that she would renounce the marriage she had entered into:

Kora: Sisu relañ pirit lena, sisu relañ miluàlena
Namge miluà mayam charaoket'.

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* "Sunum jor dare" was explained by Mayurbhanj Santals as being the *Kul* tree, known in Bengal. Dr. Campbell, however, gives the meaning as "A species of wild fig tree, *Ficus Cordifolia*, Roxb."

[192]
[114]

4: Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
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[Introductory P Xi]

PREFACE

This book is an attempt to give a systematic account of the manners and customs, laws and government, religious beliefs, origin and ethnological affinities of the Santals of the Santal Parganas. 121

The author from 1931 to 1934 collected most of his data from twenty-two villages of the different Damin areas of the Santal Parganas. Later on in 1944 and 1945 he paid occasional visits to some villages outside Damin also. He is of the opinion that not much appreciable change had taken place within the following years of the Santals of the Santal Parganas. 114 [178]

In this book the author has not devoted a great deal to matters which have already been fully described in authoritative works such as folklore, folk songs, Santal disease, medicine and language. 121

The author gladly takes this opportunity to record his grateful thanks to many colleagues who have helped him with valued suggestions and criticisms. He is particularly indebted to the late Dr. Panchanan Mitra, former Head of the Department of Anthropology, Calcutta University, who helped him by giving valued suggestions and encouragement. To Mr. D. Rangiya and Mr. J.D. Mehra, thanks are due for the revision of the proof sheets. Many others have helped but the following names may be specially mentioned viz: Mr. I.P.S. Monga, Mr. S.C. Tiwari, Mr. A. Sharma, Mr. P.N. Gulati, Mr. K. Guha, Mr. H.L. Seth (Artist) and Mr. J.D. Mavalwala. 128 000

P.C.B.

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N. B. Scale one inch = 13.5 Miles.

1 [i.e. on original page. - Analyst]

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174 social order of the Pre-Dravidian Santals. In the
177 Pre-Aryan and Pre-Dravidian culture of India, the Santals rather than the Mundas or Hos of Chota Nagpur stand in the lime light. Similarly their contact with Dravidian culture which at one time was not at all confined to Southern India, is well proved from their neighbours, the Malers, who in language along with the Chota Nagpur Oraons speak a Dravidian
197 tongue. Linguistically the Santals belong to what has been called the westernmost peripheral representatives of what is the Hawaiian type family in the Pacific.

161 At the Census of 1931 they numbered over two
162 and a half million. In Santal Parganas the number was 7,54,804, the rest was distributed over the other parts of Bihar, Bengal, Orissa and Assam. If we study the strength of the population of the Santal during the thirty years (1901 to 1931) in the two provinces, Bihar and Bengal combined, it can be seen that they have increased from 18,69,074 to 25,08,789 which represents an increase of over 33 percent in a single generation.

174 As regards the origin of the Santals it is very difficult to say anything definite. There are no authentic written records of their own. From the traditions, customs, language and physical features of Santals one can conjecture to a certain extent about their origin. On the basis of the above items several theories have been put forward to account for their origin. Revd. 3
• 114 Skrefsurd[1] has suggested that the Santals entered India
174 from the North West and first settled in the Punjab and then made their way to their present habitat at Chota Nagpur. But Colonel Dalton and Sir William Hunter[2],

1. Introduction to Grammar of Santali Language 1873.
2. Annals of Rural Bengal.
3. [Erratum: this should read "Rev." Cf. errata sheet, category 116, p. x -- Analyst]

4: Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
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believed that the Santals came to the present abode from North East India. 114 174

Dr. A. Campbell[1] is of the opinion that the Santals, or rather the people of whom they are a portion, occupied the country on both sides of the Ganges, but more especially that in the north. Starting from the north-east, they gradually worked their way up the valley of the Ganges till we find them in the neighbourhood of Benares, with their headquarters near Mirzapur. Here the main body, which had kept to the northern bank of the river, crossed, and, heading southwards, came to the Vindhya hills. This obstruction deflected them to the left, and they at length found themselves on the tableland of Chota Nagpur, and he further writes "Efforts have been made to identify the countries, rivers, forts, etc. mentioned in the traditions of the Santals with those of similar names in Chota Nagpur. Localities have in many instances been found bearing traditional names, and the inference has been drawn that it was here that the traditions of the Santals took their rise, and that their institutions were formed. But only a slight knowledge of these traditions is necessary to show that they belong to a much more remote period than the location of the Santals in Chota Nagpur, and to countries separated from it by many hundreds of miles."

Objecting to the above theory Sir Herbert Risley[2] writes the following "A people whose only means of recording facts consists of tying knots in strings, and who have no bards to hand down a national epic by [211] [538]

1. The Traditional Migration of the Santal Tribe, Indian Antiquity pp. 103-6. [113]
2. Tribes and Castes of Bengal Vol. II pp. 228-6.

4: Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
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oral tradition, can hardly be expected to preserve the memory of their past long enough or accurately enough for their accounts of it to possess any historical value. If, however, the legends of the Santals are regarded as an account of recent migrations, their general purport will be found to be fairly in accord with actual facts'. He further writes "The earliest settlements which Santal tradition speaks of, those in Ahiri Pipri and Chai Champa, lie on the north-western frontier of the tableland of Hazaribagh and in the direct line of advance of the numerous Hindu immigrants from Bihar. That the influx of Hindus has in fact driven the Santals eastward is beyond doubt, and the line which they are known to have followed in their retreat corresponds on the whole with that attributed to them in their tribal legends".

Rev. P.O. Bodding of the Scandinavian Mission in the Santal Parganas and well known for his works on the life and customs of the Santals believes that the Santals entered India from the North Eastern gate. He draws his conclusion from their customs, language and physical features. He points out that many of the customs as preserved, point to the east, even further than Assam. He also mentions from their language that the linguistic relatives of the Santals are to be found to the east, in Southern Burma and on the Malaya Peninsula. He tries to trace their origin from their somatological characters, and says that "the Dravidian type, although the prevalent one, is by no means the only one found. Several Aryan types are met with and a Mongoloid one is not very uncommon. Other types may be found, but are too few to be taken into account. All this proves mixture of blood at some

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time or other. What I would especially draw attention to in this connection is the Mongoloid type and types resembling what is found in Assam, Burma and further on".

In summing up he writes "If we are to accept the tradition of the people, these either affirm or presuppose that since the time when the human race was split up into nations they have always been wandering in a more or less easterly direction—a direction which now-a-days also is followed by them in all their migrations. This would imply that they came into India from the north-west. I must confess that I personally was long of this opinion, and I have not given it up altogether, but I am more and more getting my eyes opened to the fact that the Santal and Munda peoples have their connections towards the East".

Santal Movements in Historical Periods:—From the above it appears that we are now not certain about their original home. From the ancient records available it appears that there is no doubt that the Santal began to settle in Chota Nagpur and its neighbouring areas during historic times. The earliest mention of them is recorded in an article of Sir John Shore entitled "Some Extraordinary Facts, Customs and Practices of the Hindus"[1]. In this article Sir John designates them as "Soontars", who were residing in Ramgarh. The first mention of the Santals in the district of Santal Parganas occurs in Montogomery Martin's Eastern India[2]. There are two references. In the first

1. Asiatic researches 1795.
2. Buchanan Hemilton's manuscripts.

4: Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
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it is written in the following words "it is only in Lakerdewani that some impure Taungtars have been permitted to work the cow, and the most violent opposition was at first made to such an atrocious innovation; but the obstinacy of the barbarians prevailed, chiefly, I believe, because they were thought powerful in witchcraft, and because disputes with such people were considered as dangerous". The second is "The tenants of Bihar in general transact their own business with the agents of the zamindars, and it is only among the rude tribe called Saungtar, and in the Bengalese parts of the district that a kind of chief tenant is employed to transact the whole affairs of the community.[1]" According to Hunter, "The Permanent Settlement for the land tax in 1790 resulted in a general extension of village, and the Santals were hired to rid the lowlands of the wild beasts which, since the great famine of 1769, had everywhere encroached upon the margin of cultivation. This circumstance was so noticeable as to find its way into the London papers, and from 1792 a new era in the history of the Santal dates."[1] Thus according to Hamilton the Santals came to Handwe and Belpalta between 1790 to 1810 from Birbhoom being oppressed by the Zamindars. Between 1815 to 1830 Sutherland and Ward noticed the Santals in the Dumka and Godda Damins. Mr. Dunbar, Collector of Bhagalpur shows that by 1836 no less than 427 villages had been established in Damin areas "inhabited by the Santals and Bhuiyas but chiefly by the former". The Santals entered this region and spread far afield without much opposition from the Paharias, (the Malers, the Mal-Paharias), and most of these Paharias slowly

1. Annals of Rural Bengal.

retired to the Rajmahal Hills. In 1851 Captain Sherwill found 83,265 Santals in Daminikoh alone.

Santal Rebellion (Hul) of 1855. Mr. Buchanan Hamilton has mentioned in his unpublished manuscipt that "the Santals has settled in the Dumka sub-division by 1809 having come last from Birbhum in consequence of the annoyance which they have received from its Zamindars". In 1818 Mr. Sutherland found them engaged in clearing the jungles under the hills in Godda sub-division. Mr. Dunbar, Collector of Bhagalpur, mentioned that by 1836 about 427 villages had been established by the Santals in the Damin area.

These Santals of the Daminikoh in the year 1855 became rebellious. The chief cause of this rebellion was the oppression of the Mahajans, the Darogas and the corruption of the Amlas. These Mahajans gave the Santals money as a loan with high interest and one, he had contracted a debt he had little chance of escape, because if his creditor sued him, the Santals could not produce any authentic record, whereas the creditor had his ledgers and day book. These Mahajans sometimes without going to court to realise his capital and interest, sent his agents to take away their cattle forcibly. The Santals bore this oppression thinking that it was useless for them to obtain redress against the wealthy Mahajans, besides that had not enough money to pay the Amlas and Pleaders in the Court. If they approached the Court and loged a complaint against these Mahajaus, they only got an order on the police to enquire and report, but the police generally sided with the Mahajans and submitted reports in their favour. [1 Erratum: i.e., "once". 2 Erratum: i.e., Mahajans. -- Analyst]

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[793] of the forest where the hunt is to be held, to ensure
[782] success and safety. After performance of the ceremony
[411] the whole party enters the forest with bows and
[534] arrows, Pellet bows (Gorkhas), Slings (Gaduar), Tangha (Kopi), battle axes, dogs and Tamuka (drums) and Sakuas (Blowpipe made of buffalo horn) which they beat and blow furiously all through the hunt.

In the forest they stand side by side in a long line surrounding an area. Some remain ready with their weapons behind the big trees, th drums and blowpipes of horn they beat and blow furiously. The men nearest to the game shoot their arrows at them; when the animals being frightened run hither and thither, men shoot arrows, sling stones and tanghas at them. If the game elude the arrows and other weapons shot or hurled at them, the baffled hunts-men shout out and let their dogs run after them. The men, who stand in line, then entangle the game and the hunters who followed the game come up and
• [114] kill them. Once when I was at Bokrabandh and Katahaldih I saw the Santal process of catching hares and ichneuman The Santals barricade a meadow, which is just by the side of a forest, with branches of trees and bamboos, only keeping open the side which is towards the forest. They keep an opening on one side where they fix a trap. They drive the hares from the jungle towards the place which is surrounded by the branches. The hares run towards the trap and fall into it. They kill ichneuman in the following way. The inchneuman remains under the ground and some dig holes, while others remain ready with Tanghis. As soon as it comes out they strike or throw Tanghis

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535 fix flowers in their coiffure and over the ear. The males
[301] also tie peacock's feather on their foreheads. I am now
[302] describing the dancing of the maidens which I saw
[114] personally in front of Katikund bungalow, which is fifteen miles from Dumka. The maidens stand closely in a line in order of height. They then fall away sidewise to form a big semicircle, limbs all moving as if they belong to one creature. They move forward two or three steps and in the same fashion they move backward and at the same time they make a circular
[533] movement. The dancers in the ring sing songs all the while to the music of the flute. Three or four men take their stand in the centre of the ring, beating Tum tum and semi-circular drums furiously.

796 **Dancing during Baha festivals** :- Their dancing at the
535 time of Baha festivals is different from that described above. They stand in a line the tallest first and the shortest last, then they bend down and each one raises and lowers both hands. In this way they move forward
[533] two or three steps and again come back. As above the dancers in the line sing songs, drumming and fluting goes on all the while.

535 **Dancing in which both male and female take part** :- Both maidens and youths decked with flowers and peacock's feathers hold hands so that the breasts of the girl touch the back of the man next to her, going round in a great
[533] circle. The dancers sing in tune to the music of drums and flutes played by the musicians in the centre of the circle.

859 **Games**:- In old days there was more play and less
178 work for Santal children. But now-a-days they have to go with their parents to the fields and do their share

Though there is a jocose relationship between them, the elder brother's wife is respected as mother. So also, the elder brother avoids even touching the shadow of the younger brother's wife, not to speak of her being regarded as the property of the elder brother. There is also the custom of sororate, by which a wife's younger sister could be married by the husband. But the wife's sister is generally and almost universally married to another. So it is possible that the identity of the terms of kinship for the father and father's brothers may be explained by the levirate. In such a case the father's brother's wife would be a second mother and so the terms of kinship for the mother and father's brother's wife, would be the same. Besides, the function of the father's elder brother's wife in a joint family system is more or less that of a supervising mother; so this also might explain the identity of the kinship terms.

(Santal)	Father	... Apum, now also baba.
,,	Father's brother	... (Gongo) Apum (elder), (Hopen) Apum (younger).
,,	Mother	... (Ayo Gongo).
,,	Father's brother's Wife.	... (Gongo) Ayo (elder), (Hopen) Ayo (younger).

But the Santal family though apparently the same in structure of kinship terminology is quite different from the polyandrous Toda family. Comparing the families of these tribes it can be seen clearly that polyandry is not present amongst the Santals. Mr. Craven and the Rev. L. O. Skrefsrud have stated in J.A.S.B., Part 3, 1903, pp. 88-90, that fraternal

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114 595 polyandry is a recognised custom among the Santals and this has been taken up as an official fact in the District Gazetteer, Santal Parganas. But when we compared a Santal family minutely with the polyandrous family of the Todas as above, we found the opinion of these two writers not supportable by any evidence whatsoever.

593 **Husband and Wife**: The definite nature of an individual non-polyandrous family amongst the Santals is brought about by the relation between the husband and wife. When they once settle down to life, it is generally for good; the conjugal love is similar to what we find in civilized society. The husband in important matters consults his wife. At the time of the marriage of their sons and daughters, the consent of both the father and the mother is necessary. There is often a genuine mutual respect between husband and wife. By the legal basis of the marriage, the Santal recognises the ownership of the husband individually, as indicated by the mutual besmearing with Sindur or red vermilion, but only in a minor degree, that of the family of the husband, over a woman. The Santal wife, inspite of her theoretically subordinate position, in practical life has a fair amount of independence and often a position which may be said to be nearly co-ordinate with that of her husband, within her own sphere. The Santal husband and wife carry out the duties towards one another as far as possible in a primitive society. The husband gives clothing to wear, lodging and board and other necessary things which a wife in a primitive life requires, while the wife feeds her husband by cooking food, for which she collects fuel from the neighbouring

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forest, and brings water from a streamlet flowing near by. Every morning the wife getting up from the bed cleans the house with mud and cow dung. Over and above that, she goes to the agricultural field to help her husband. In the daily social life of the people the Santal woman has a very independent and strong position both at home and in the village.

Position of Women: Some writers have remarked that the Santal women are looked upon as mere chattel, with which opinion I disagree. Rev. P. O. Bodding is of the same opinion with me (see some remarks on the Position of Women among the Santals). Such writers have gone too far. Making a tour of almost the whole of the Santal parganas, I got the idea that the Santal women have an important status in their society. Though they are shut off from certain religious and administrative functions their economic status is very high. It is they who generally go to market, do the bargaining—all the produce is in their hand—and they make over the proceeds for the sustenance of the family to the male members. They are the repositories of the moral and religious tradition of the society. All the infringements of social order are brought to the notice of the male members through them.

Parents and Children: The relation between the parents and children among the Santals is also of a sweet affectionate type. How strong the affection of the Santal parents is towards their children can be seen from the following facts. The mother or the grandmother of the children always carries the children even when going to the Mela or to the field When a child is attacked with any disease, the parents

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593 609 (younger brother's wife) cannot touch the shadow of her husband's elder brother.

614. **Sept and Sub-sept Organisation:** The internal structure of the Santal tribe is singularly complex and elaborate. There are several exogamous divisions called Parishes (septs). Ten names were obtained by me at Dumka, Dumka Damin, Godda, Godda Damin, Jasidhi, and Hazaribagh districts. In Deoghar I got eleven Parishes:

	Sept	Meaning	Sept	Meaning
1.	Hansdha	Wild goose	6. Soren	The constellation Pleiades.
2.	Murmu	Nilgai	7. Tudu	Nil
3.	Kisku	Nil	8. Baske	Nil
4.	Hemrom	Betel Palm	9. Besra	Hawk
5.	Marandi	Sabai grass	10. Chonrey	Lizard

In Deoghar in addition to the above I recorded another sept namely 'Pauria' the meaning of which is Pigeon.

• 114 614 Edward Garnet Man described in his 'Santhal and Santhalia' the following twelve Parishes of the Santal :

	Sept	Sept
1.	Hanshdha	7. Besera
2.	Murmu	8. Kedoar
3.	Soren	9. Baske
4.	Tudu	10. Marmoring
5.	Marli	11. Bisra
6.	Kisku	12. Hemron

Marli, Besera, Kedoar, and Marmoring—these four Parishes I could not find any where in the Santal Parganas.

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Dalton in the Ethnology of Bengal divided the Santals into the following tribes : 114 • 614

Sept		Sept	
1.	Saran	7.	Tudi
2.	Murmu	8.	Baski
3.	Marli	9.	Hemrow
4.	Kisku	10.	Kurwar
5.	Besera	11.	Chorai
6.	Hansda		

The Karwar, which Mr. Dalton recorded as a tribe, is not a tribe but a sub-sept of the Hansdha sept. He has written the English equivalent of the Santali word Parish as tribe, which I think is not correct. In the truest sense of the term it will be a sept.

Sir Herbert Risley has noted the following twelve septs of the Santals ; 614

Sept		Sept	
1.	Hansdak	7.	Baske
2.	Murmu	8.	Besra
3	Kisku	9.	Pauria
4.	Hemrom	10.	Chore
5.	Saren	11.	Marandi
6.	Tudu	12.	Bedea.

Among the twelve septs, I found Besra, Murmu, Kisku, Tudu, Hansda, Soren, Marandi, Heinrom and Baski in large numbers in the Damin area of the Santal Parganas. The septs, Chonrey and Besra are regarded by the Santal as inferior amongst the twelve septs ; that is why the people who actually belong to one of the above two septs, give themselves the names of the other septs

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of the Kisku sept. Santals are very particular about the honour of their women so far at least as outsiders are concerned and it is quite in keeping with their ideas that a sept formed by liaison with a Diku (non-Santal) should have been looked down upon and eventually banished from the community. 614 539

The names of the sub-septs have been collected from my Santal informant Ram Marandi (Parganait of Sundar Pahari of Godda sub-division). It agrees substantially in detail when I checked up the data from Campbell's Dictionary published in 1899. The sincerity of my informant is to be judged from his not being able to mention any sub-sept Chonrey and Pauria which do not occur in that area. The general impression which I gathered from other Santal dignitaries is that the sub-septs did not generally exist. The sub-septs appear at least in this case not to be exagamous units at all; they rather mark family distinction and traditions, for instance those who would not paint vermilion would be called Sada (white) or those who may have been descended from a headman or a priest would be called Majhikhil or Naikekhil. The sub-septs thus marked an important tendency of the Santal exogamous group either to be divided into sub-groups or sometimes to add a sub-group to itself. This alone explains the disparity in number of the sub-septs in the various septs. There is of course a tendency of the sub-septs to approximate to the number twelve according to the pattern of the total number of the septs. But this is by no means the case. Apparently the one important function of the sub-sept is to distinguish between Nij and Sada which occurs in all the septs. This pertains 614 [115] [114] [302] [184] [302]

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Descent of the Santal is always reckoned in the male line and a man has the same totem as his father; the totem of the mother's father's line is not respected. As a female has no clan of her own, she is not a recognised member of her father's or of husband's clan and has not therefore to observe the taboos relating to their totems. But actually the Santal women do not kill any totem animal or any totem plant, just as their husbands do not kill or destory any totem animal, plant and other object. 614

Individual or sex totem is unknown to the Santals. Their totem is hereditary and not acquired. The members of a clan do not wear any distinguishing emblem or peculiar dress nor have they representations of their totem cut or tattooed on their persons or carved or painted on their houses or any personal belongings.

MARRIAGE

The Santali name for marriage is 'Bapla'. Mr. O'Malley is of the opinion that bapla is a word which very probably meant originally mutual strengthening i.e. of the two families.[1] 58 192 114

It is strictly forbidden for any Santal to marry within his own sept (Parish). He may marry into any other sept or sub-sept to which his mother belonged. Among the Santals there is a custom that a Santal can marry a girl who is three kursis (generations) apart. There are some septs which never intermarry with one another in consequence of some ancient feud between them. A Hansdak male or a female 582 614

[1]L.SS. O'Malley, Bengal District Gazetteers. Santal Parganas, Calcutta 1910 Vol. XXII Page 134.

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584 If the girl's father approves, then he is taken to the bridegroom's house to enquire about the bridegroom's family position and economic condition. If he is satisfied in the enquiry then preparations are set afoot for the inspection of the bride and bridegroom by the representatives of both the parties. If the boy and the girl are regarded as suitable partners then arrangements are made for the pair to meet. The usual place for such meeting for the Santals is a fair. I saw such a meeting in a fair at Katikund village within Dumka Damin. A little away from the fair a bridegroom with his relatives stood in a row and the bride with her relatives stood in another row face to face about four feet apart. Then one of the females on the bride's side approached the bridegroom and rubbed mustard oil on his face and gave him some fried rice and the woman saluted all those who were there. The same thing was repeated by a woman of the bridegroom's side to the bride and her relatives.

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After this, a day is fixed for the informal inspection of the bride. On the appointed day the bridegroom's father with the headman of his village, the marriage-maker (Raiber) and a few important persons of the village starts at day break for the bride's village. When the party reaches the outskirts of the bride's village, the marriage maker contacts the headman of that village and informs him about the arrival of the party. The news of the arrival of the groom's party at the outskirts of the village is circulated by the gorait (peon of the headman) to all the members of the village. Then the bride's father together with the headman go to receive them and enquire whether they have

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inter alia he says, "We implore you to let us be with you to brew and drink beer, to fetch water, to pin leaves together on the day of marriage, the day of chhatiar, the day of cremation. We were like crows, we have become white like paddy birds. You, villagers, be our witnesses". This ends the formal part of the proceedings.

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The festival is concluded by further drinking and singing of chhatiar and other songs. It will be seen that there is no special or formal act done by the village people. They are invited for the occasion; the father (or his representative) implores the community to recognize the young ones as participators at the three great social occasions, and the people acknowledge this by drinking handi, the Santal mode of ratification. There is no kind of sacrifice at either janam or chacho chhatiar". [082]

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[114]

Adoption: Among the Santals to adopt a child is of rare occurrence. Dr. Campbell says they do not practise adoption. Rev. P.O. Bodding is of the opinion that adoption is present among the Santals. I have also heard of one or two instances of adoption in the Damin area of the Santhal Parganas.

If a man takes a second wife and this woman has a boy by a former husband, the man may adopt this boy. He proceeds in the following way: He first informs the village headman, then calls the nearest male relatives of the boy whose consent is necessary. If they agree they say so in the presence of the headman and the villagers of the village where the man, who will adopt the boy, lives. Then the male relatives

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of the branch (each leaf of the branch means a day) because as many leaves as it contains so many days afterwards this bitlaha is to take place. During this operation the Parganait of that bunglow and even the Sub-divisional officer of that district are generally commissioned to superintend so that nothing untoward happens. One such outcasting I saw personally about two years ago at Dumka within the Santal Pargana.

In the early morning of the appointed day the bachelors and other male members of the neighbouring villages with flutes, drums, bows and arrows meet at the end of the village street where the culorit lives. The bachelors compose extempore obscene songs in which he is mentioned by name. Drumming is kept up so terribly that the sound can be heard for miles around. At a sign from the leader the crowd with wild yells and lifted hands holding bows rushes towards the village, drumming and blowing their flutes loudly and singing obscene songs. The women of that village do not remain there; they go away to some other place to keep their prestige.

When the crowd reaches the house of the offender they tie a short charred bit of firewood, a worn-out broom and some used leaf-plates on a long pole of bamboo and fix it at the entrance to the courtyard. Within the courtyard they break the fireplace and all things and even sometimes break the house. Young men in undress desecrate the rooms.

The persons outcasted are not allowed to take food with others, they cannot give their children in marriage within the Santal community. The parents of both sides also would be outcasted, and those who give shelter to these outcasts will be treated like-wise.

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CHAPTER IV

RELIGION

Ceremonies and Festivals

The proper analysis of the religion of the Santals is as difficult as it is necessary for the history of succession of religious ideas in India and perhaps in the whole world. If there is any culture which still carries on the impress of the underlying philosophic speculation and order of thought that was widespread in India prior to the rise of the Dravidian culture, it was very likely the belief and social order of the Pre-Dravidian Santals.

In the study of the hypothetical development of religious ideas, the Santals figure prominently in the scheme of evolution. Thus Clodd cites them as an example of beliefs proceeding animism. He says :

'This is very interesting considering the sway of the ideas of impersonal universal spirit or mana so widely prevalent amongst the Austric-speaking people of which the Santals are a western peripheral branch. It is a subject for future enquiry, whether there had been any influence of Vedic or Upanishadic speculations of the universal supreme energy carried by these people in the migration eastward. There is a calling back of the shade of the departed common amongst those pre-Dravidian tribes of Chota-Nagpur which recalls the Vedic passages (Rigveda, Mandal 10)'.

The enquiries of Pater W. Schmidt, probably inspired by the subconscious Christian idea of an early revelation to primitive man of the idea of a supreme personal god, have led to the finding of many instances of the primitive high god in the first cultural strata of

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114 food-gatherers. The Santals fall in the category of the
77 primary or secondary cultural strata in the scheme of
174 Pater Schmidt. The idea of a supreme being or a
171 personal high god is well known amongst the primitive tribes of Central Provinces, Chota-Nagpur and Assam Thus according to Dalton, he is called Boro by the Kharias, Ote Boram or Sing Bonga by the Hos, Dula Deb or Pharsi Pen by the Gonds, Bura Penu or Bela Penu by the Khonds. In Assam, he is known as the Father by the Abors, as old bearded Rishi Salgong residing in heaven by the Garos, as the creator Pa-thian amongst the Kukis and the great god Arnam Kethe amongst the Mikirs. The enquiries of Sir James Frazer in his "Worship of Nature" have led him to cite most of the Chota-Nagpur tribes as devotees of the Sun god as the supreme being. Rai Bahadur S C. Roy thus has analysed the Dharmes or Biri Bela of the Oraons as Sun god. Similarly, according to him, the Ber Pitia or Ber Chichha of the Mulers is the Sun god and so also is the Bhagavan of the Korwas. The Bur a Penu of the Khonds is also the God of light.

114 Coming now to the Santals we find almost all the
77 authorities agreeing in conceding to them the idea of
176 a supreme being. But there is a great diversity of
174 opinion as to what he is called. According to Dalton, he is Sing Bonga amongst the Santals of Chota-Nagpur. Risley (Appendix VII, p. 446, People of India), on the authority of Skrefsurd, says that the supreme deity is called Thakur. E.G. Man, working in Orissa about fifty years ago, gives (Santhal and Santhalia, Chapter VI) the name of the supreme being of the Santals as Chando or Chando Bonga. Bompass (P. 402, Folklore of the Santal Parganas) in one of his folklores

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describes that Thakur Baba had made everything very convenient for mankind, etc. Rev. Bodding, who is the most recent and exhaustive worker on Santal beliefs and customs specially in the Mohulpaharia area in Santal Parganas, gives the name as Chando, 'the creator, the only one who gives and restores life' (Studies in Santal Medicine and Connected Folklore). Bodding further says that this name is often confounded with Cando the Sun. My own personal enquiries in the villages in Katikund within Dumka Damin and in the village on the base of the Zalway Hill, in Deoghar Sub-division, in the year 1932, elicited the information that the general name for God is Kando and the name for the Sun in that area is Sin Kando and for the moon Ninda Kando.

The Santal lives in harmony with the surroundings, having no temple and stooping to no idol made by his hand for the purpose of worship. It may be said that the Santal lives like a child of nature in rapport with all his surroundings, the hill, the dale, the spring or the grove being the objects of his reverential fear. They are the abodes of a supreme supernatural energy or the departmental spirits or the bongas. The bongas are friendly beings at times, but most often mischievous and naughty elves playing mischievous pranks with men, bringing them trouble and causing misery at times. These bongas are supposed at times to harass humanity, to eat people (as the Santals express it) because they are hungry, displeased, hurt or envious, and this eating is the devouring of health and substance of the person exposed to the displeasure of the spirits. The spirits may further be used by, or themselves use, the witches as medium.

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Hindi word Nayak or leader, a term often used in the old Hindu army for lieutenants. Rai Bahadur Roy shows the Birhor Naya in a plate as Raja or chief[1]. Similarly, the word Pahan may be equated with the Hindi Pradhan or chief. These indicate the power of the religious functionary in the state. It cannot be said, at least from the study of the Chota-Nagpur tribes as well as those of Assam, that the medicine-man developed into the king, for in both the areas we find the temporal chief superior in authority to the ecclesiatic functionary. But the terms themselves show that the religious functionary is given a considerable recognition in temporal status. It is possible Hindu missionaries in bygone days might have exercised temporal and spiritual authority from which these tribes again recovered, re-establishing their own indigenous superiority of their secular chief or headman.

The term for the spirit-doctor with second sight is Mati among most of the primitive tribes of Chota-Nagpur. The Mundas, the Birhors and the Oraons all call their spirit-doctor Mati, the Hos of Seraikella call him Ojha[2]. The Santal term Ojha has rightly been objected to by Rev. P.O. Bodding as a Hindi loan word derived from Upadhyaya[3]. But we think he goes too far when he says that the whole system of Ojhaism is derived from the Hindus. Similar practices in Hindu society may be sometimes detected in the lowest stratum and also under even the mystic Tantric ritual. They

[1] S.C. Roy's The Birhor, p. 340, Plate XXVIII.
[2] A Chatterjee and T. Das, Hos. of Seraikella, part I p. 28.
[3] Rev. P.O. Bodding, Studies in Santal disease and Connected Folklore, part I.

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Rev. Bodding gives a detailed description of this theory,[1] where he describes how there is a belief of tejo causing leprosy or hydrophobia, etc., how these tejos enter the body through food, etc. The tejo germs are often believed to be collected by witches for spreading disease amongst people. In the first place naturally the herbalist tries his drugs but this failing the witch-doctor is called.

The Tejo theory of disease falls in line with what Dr. Clements[2] calls disease-object intrusion. Dr. Clements in his study has apparently left out (at least he has not specifically mentioned) the important pre-Dravidian tribes of Chota-Nagpur such as Santals, Hos, Mundas, etc., and thus in his distribution map No. 2 this portion of India is not shaded as it ought to have been. He has shown this idea to be almost universal in the New World and extended up to Siberia Another area is shown in South-Eastern Asia and the Santal under consideration would show a continuous distribution of this from Chota-Nagpur to the Pacific area. Other centres in Europe, Western Asia and Africa are recorded as being capable of tentative connections with the area of the Santal and South-Eastern Asia. The tejo concept of the Santal is identical with the disease-object intrusion concept in other areas. According to Dr. Clements (to whom the Santal area is unknown) "the criterion is the actual presence in the body of a tangible, supposedly pathogenic substance. Now although the exact nature of this substance varies considerably, such

[1]Rev. P.O. Bodding, Studies in Santal Disease and connected Folklore, Part I, pp. 6-8 Memoirs of the A.S.B., Vol. X, No. 1, pp. 1-132.

[2]Dr. Clements, op. cit., p. 209.

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ghost or demon. Dr. Clements has drawn rightly a distinction between a spirit intrusion and spirit possession.[1] Amongst the Santals the most respected person would be the Ojha who would work for good, being 'possessed' by a spirit. Whereas all the evils and sorceries are due in their belief to the intrusion of the bongas, often worked to that effect by that most hated and feared human set, the dains or witches. It is further curious to observe how the concepts of sorcery, breach of taboo, and bonga-intrusion have become closely interwoven with each other in Santal thought. The spirit or bonga-intrusion is generally aided by the human agency of the sorceress—but the witch of the intruding malevolent bonga would be powerless to offend unless the victim had committed some breach of taboo. The witch-doctor who is called in aid of the diseased, first of all enquiries[2] carefully about the conduct of the patient so as to find out the nature of the breach of the taboo which has enabled the evil bonga to intrude and then with the help of expiatory rites and superior spirit-aid he drives away the intruding evil bonga.

Spirit intrusion, according to Dr. Clements, is probably considerably later than disease-object intrusion and had undergone considerable diffusion before the full Neolithic period of Western Asia. Clements has further shown that belief in disease causing sorcery is distributed to the ends of the earth. It is of almost universal occurrence in the Old World and extends from the north to the south even in the New World. The basic idea has been suggested to be possibly due to the "Elementargedanken" of Bastian.

[1] Dr. Clements, op. cit., pp. 216-225.

2 [Erratum: this should read "enquires." Cf. errata sheet, category 116, p. ix -- Analyst]

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by bongas are called in. There is no female Shaman as the female with supernatural power is always looked upon as wicked, malevolent and is persecuted as a witch. So it is to pit his higher knowledge against the wicked machinations of the witches that the *Jan guru* or *ojhas* are called who thus are important social functionaries curing individuals of their constant depression due to fear of sorcery and the evil eye or acting as village mental sanitation officials. Thus these Santal medicine-men, soothsayers and masters of incantations have to work hand in hand with the chiefs.

The name *ojha*, which the Santal uses, is not a Santal word; it is a Hindi word, used for diviner, enchanter, sorcerer, magician, etc. The word is derived from Sanskrit. The Santal has borrowed this word from the Hindi-speaking people. Rev. P.O. Bodding is of opinion that the Santal has adopted this exorcism from the Hindi-speaking people. His argument in favour of it is that the work of a Santal *ojha* in nature partly resembles that of the Hindu *ojha* and the special *bongas* invoked by the Santal *ojhas* all have names of Hindu origin in addition to their special *bongas*. But a tribe which believes so much in spirits (both malevolent and benevolent) must have some method of propitiation of those spirits as is usual among almost all the primitive tribes of the world.

The *ojha* is also a physician. The difference between the herbal doctors and the *ojha* lies in the fact that the former gives only medicine whilst the latter in addition to giving medicine tries to drive away the disease by magic incantations, etc., by the assistance of his special *bongas* whom he knows how to force to work.

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624 and scold him and fine him. At the time of *Sohrae*
[796] *parab* all the villagers, young and old, male and female, drink handi (rice beer). Singing, dancing and other entertainments go on without restriction for five days and nights and at these times the boys and girls remain in charge of the Jogmanjhi. At the birth of a
[844] child and at marriages he is in charge of those cere-
[585] monies, and when the village youths attend a night festival he is in charge of them. Formerly he had a
[178] very important position though now gradually he is losing all authority; but the young people still use him as a safe repository of their secrets. The *Jogmanjhi* has an assistant called *Jog-Paramanik* who officiates when he is absent.

Village Beadle—Goddet (Gorait-Risley): Next in rank is the *Goddet*, an orderly or peon of the headman of the village, who calls the villagers together at his command and also collects sacrificial fowl for the village sacrifices. Whenever any foreigner comes in the village and enquires about the headman, the *Goddet* at once
• [114] runs and informs him. (One morning I went to a village at Katikund within Dumka Sub-division. I asked the villager where the headman of the village was. The *Goddet* said he was in the agricultural field and at once ran to call him. He then came back with the headman to me). The Santals call the *Goddet Marang Manjhi* i.e., great chief, and there are many instances of *Goddets* having ousted a *Manjhi* or even a *Parganait*. If a *Paramanik* gets the office of *Manjhi* it is considered proper that the *Goddet* should become *Paramanik*.

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Federal Officers (Parganait) and Assistant Federal Officer (Deshmanjhi)

A *Parganait* is an officer who is in charge of several villages collectively known as *bunglow*. (For administrative purposes several villages are grouped together in what is now known as a *bunglow*). The number of villages contained within each vary in every case. The place where I worked, the Sundarpahari *bunglow*, within Godda sub-division, consisted of the following 28 villages.

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Villages of Sundarpahari Bunglow

1.	Tetria	15.	Jitpur.
2.	Domdi	16.	Bara Kalajuri.
3.	Kusumghati	17.	Chota Kalajuri.
4.	Tilabad.	18.	Gamaroe.
5.	Amjora.	19.	Gamarbera.
6.	Jisubathan.	20.	Dahubera.
7.	Bara Kalajore.	21.	Telbitha.
8.	Choto Kalajore.	22.	Jamalpur.
9.	Mohompur.	23.	Jiapuri.
10.	Sundarpahari.	24	Ladhapathor.
11.	Salodi	25.	Phulberia.
12.	Salpathra.	26	Manibathan.
13.	Paharpur.	27.	Dhapahari.
14.	Rampur.	28.	Zolo

As a *Manjhi* has an assistant so the *Parganait* also has one known as *Desh-Manjhi*. There are also *Chakladars* who are appointed by the *Parganait* who act as the messengers of the two above officers. Outside the Damin area there is no *Parganait* and *sardars* are appointed by the Sub-divisional officer having a number of *chowkidars* under him.

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characteristic homogenity among the Santals, the Bhotias, the Rajis, the Rajputs of Kulu valley and the Chinese.

The dominant gene V for general thikness[1] of the epidermis, goes on decreasing from the Negroes, through the Caucasoids to the Mongoloids where it attains the minimum value. The Santal with a value of 19.0 comes very near to the Bhotias (19.7), Rajis (24.1) and Chinese (14.9). The gene (v) also remains in the same range for the Santals, Bhotias, Rajis and Chinese. For radial cushioning the Santals are very near the Rajputs of Jaunsar and the Germans, showing no Mongoloid affinities. But the genes for Ulnar cushioning categorize the Santals with the Bhotias, Rajputs of Kulu and the Eskimos.

ABO BLOOD GROUPS AMONG THE SANTALS.

The following pages dealing with serological data on various proto-Australoid and Mongoloid tribes already published by various authors have been incorporated and analysed in the present work. The author, however regrets that during the course of his field investigations it was not possible to collect any serological data.

[114]

1 [Erratum: this should read "thickness." Cf. errata sheet, category 116, p. ix -- Analyst]

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143 From the above table it appears that in the distribution of genes p, q and r the Santals fall closest to the proto-Australoids of India like the Hill Maler, Maria Gond, Malpaharia, Munda, on the one hand, to the southern Mongoloids like the Bhotia, Tibetan and Lepcha, and to the "partial" or mixed Mongoloids like the Tharus Rajis, Kumaoni Rajput etc. on the other. Because of the paucity of the data in most of the series represented in the table, it will be appropriate to say that the gene frequencies should be used cautiously. A very striking fact is the high incidence of group B among the castes of Northern India (particularly the 'exterior castes') which in combination with the strong doses of both the two agglutinogens is a characteristic feature of the Mundari and Monkhmer people[1].

143 The foregoing account is also suported[A] by the
144 dermatoglyphic and somatometric analysis and as such it is highly appropriate to suggest that the Santals who are mainly proto-Australoids also show certain Mongoloid affinities on ethnic scales which in my opinion should be thoroughly investigated in Central India.

143 It is interesting in this connection to note Bodding's
144 remarks regarding the Mongoloid affinity of the Santals.
114 He states, 'The theory of Mongolian descent is not tenable, but there cannot be any doubt that Mongoloid blood has been introduced, either by the Santals taking Mongolian wives, or the Santal women having illegitimate children by Mongolian men". He further remarks,

[113] [1]Sarkar S.S. Macfarlane (E.W.R.), Blood Groups in India, American Journal of Physical Anthropology Vol. 28, (1942).

[A] [Erratum: this should read "supported." Cf. errata sheet, category 116, p. ix -- Analyst]

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"other types may be found, but too few to be taken into account. All this proves mixture of blood at some time or other. What I would specially draw attention to in this connection, is the Mongoloid type and types resembling what is found in Assam, Burma and further on"[1]. 143 144 114

[1]Bengal District Gazetteers—Santal Parganas—by L.S.S.O'Malley (1910), pp. 94 and 101. [113]

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177 Pabban. The Santals observe this festival on the last
796 day of the month of Pous, just like the Hindus do.

Besides this, the Santals take part in the Durga Puja festival of the Hindus. They wear new clothes and attend the Puja with wives and children and enjoy the fun for five days like the Hindus.

756 There exists a great controversy about the institu-
177 tion of Ojhaism among the Santals. There are possi-
174 bilities of its having been borrowed from the Hindus by the Santals since the practice of this form of magico-religious ritual has much in common between the two groups, namely the Santals and the Hindus. Rev. [114] Bodding also points out the probability of the borrowing of the principles for *Ojhaism* and much of its ritual from the Hindus though he does not thereby exclude completely the converse. In part substantiation of the above contention, which however is opposed by some authors on the subject, may be cited the striking similarity between the names and functions of the Santal and Hindu *Ojhas*, pointing to perhaps a strong interconnection between the two groups in respect of *Ojhaism*. The very name *Ojha* is Hindi and is adopted by the Santals from Hindi speaking people. Further it is interesting to note that *Ojha* is a caste name among the Hindu Brahmins, and in the early days the occupation of this caste group was mainly soothsaying, foretelling and astrology and curing snake bites etc. The concentration of such groups is in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. It may therefore be considered very probable that the Santals have borrowed from the Hindus the essentials of *Ojhaism*, though certain indigenous

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PREFACE

THIS study represents an attempt to provide the kind of book that I wish could have been placed in my hands when I first began to work among the Santals. It is based very largely on material gathered during my residence in the village of Sarenga, District Bankura, between October 1932 and April 1943. Much of what is said is true of the Santals wherever they are found. The uniformity of Santal culture over a wide area raises questions of great interest to students, but no attempt has been made to deal with them here. Nor have I attempted to deal with the wider questions involved in the problem of the Christian approach to peoples living in small-scale societies, though I hope that I may have been able to supply some data relevant to the discussion. We missionaries are at times impatient of the strictures of anthropologists, but we would do well to heed the warning of such a missionary as Dr. Kraemer when he says: "Missions make the claim, on account of their religious aim, that Christianity contains the forces of moral and spiritual regeneration so sorely needed in this time of disintegration. It is encouraging to read twice, for instance, in Monica Hunter's *Reaction to Conquest* that Christianity proves able to supply a new invigorating moral basis of life. Yet missions ought always to be mindful that this does not result *mechanically* from the acceptance of Christianity, but that to achieve it there is need for a constant application to the task of religious, moral, cultural and social education—and this must be inspired by the desire *to serve the true interests of the people.*"[1]

I count it among the more fortunate circumstances of my life that my first five years were spent at Pakur in the Santal Parganas; the investigations then begun perhaps helped to shape my outlook! During the years at Sarenga I came to owe a great debt to many individual Santals. Three men in particular helped by placing their knowledge at my disposal, and most of the statements in this book have been checked more than once in the course of many conversations with them. The late Ernest Soren was for many years headmaster of the Boys' School at Sarenga; he became a Christian in early manhood and was held in high regard by all who knew him, yet he never

[1] H. Kraemer, *The Christian Message in a non-Christian World*, London, 1938, p. 436. The italics are the author's.

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forgot that he was a Santal. Another Christian who helped me was Babulal Hembrom of Barikul; a villager all his life, at my suggestion he kept a diary of life in Barikul for one year, and I have drawn freely on the material thus provided. The third name I wish to mention is that of the late Binu Hāsdāk', a *parganath* who lived in the village of Tantidanga. For some years he called to see me each week on his way to market; he used to accept a sum of two annas each time he came, not as a dole, but as the equivalent of the hospitality to which he was entitled as a visitor to my home. From him I learnt much about the ideas and customs that ruled his life, as they had done the lives of his ancestors.

A great deal has been written about the Santals, but most of the literature is difficult to find even when you know where to look for it. The bibliography contains a list of the works I have consulted, and acknowledgments have been made in footnotes. It needs to be said, however, that all subsequent workers must remain heavily indebted to that great Norwegian scholar and missionary, the late P. O. Bodding, particularly for his monumental *Santali Dictionary*, which is a veritable encyclopaedia of Santal life.

I wish to thank the Council of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal for permission to use material previously published in two papers in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal*, entitled "Some Notes on Bongaism" (Vol. V, 1939, No. 3) and "Some Beliefs and Customs relating to Birth among the Santals" (Vol. VII, 1941, No. 1). I owe much to the Rev. Edwin Smith, D.D., pre-eminent among missionary anthropologists, who spent Christmas at Sarenga in 1938, and has encouraged me since that time. I am deeply grateful to the Rev. Charles P. Groves, Professor of Missions at the Selly Oak Colleges, who has read the manuscript and saved me from numerous pitfalls, and to my friend the Rev. Wilfred H. Russell, who drew the map, as well as the illustrations on pages 24 and 49. I wish also to thank the Rev. Alec R. Spooner for preparing the Index. My wife has helped with many candid criticisms, constructive suggestions, and, above all, by her comradeship during the years at Sarenga.

W. J. CULSHAW.

BANKURA,
January, 1949.

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Dr. Guha has cautiously attempted to state those features which present-day Indian culture owes to the Proto-Australoid: "To the Proto-Australoid races may perhaps be attributed a large share of totemistic rites, exorcism, food taboos, and magical belief still obtaining in Indian life. The ban on commensality and intermarriage which forms the basis of the caste system must also owe its origin to them."[1] It is impossible to dogmatize on these subjects when one remembers how widespread each of the above factors is among primitive cultures in various parts of the world. The tribal structure of the Santals is totemistic and the clans are patrilinear, as among the other tribes of Central India. Many of the taboos and customs which have grown up round life's crises, many features in the tribal ritual, their attitude towards disease and towards the supranatural world, are fundamentally similar not only throughout these tribes but throughout the lower range of the Hindu social structure. The perusal of such a book as William Crooke's *Religion and Folklore of Northern India*[2] gives convincing evidence of the large stock of ideas that are held in common.

By the test of language the Santals reveal a high degree of social cohesion. Dr. J. H. Hutton's judgment cannot be gainsaid: "The extent of the survival of tribal languages is a better index than that of the survival of tribal religion to the social cohesion of the tribe, since the test of language is easier and more definite than that of religion, where the borderland of Hinduism is often vague and obscure."[3] The Santals have been more tenacious of their language than many of the other peoples to whom they are racially allied. They are the largest tribe in India to retain an aboriginal language to the present day. This belongs to what is known as the Austric or Austro-Asiatic family. It is closely related to Mundari as well as to Ho, Korku, Savara and Gadaba, languages spoken by smaller tribes. The relationship of the Santals with these tribes is racial and cultural as well as linguistic, and as they live in neighbouring territories it is very likely that they have a common origin. They have nevertheless been separate long enough to develop their individual languages and to possess distinct though allied cultures. Other representatives of the Austro-Asiatic languages are found farther afield, the Mon-Khmer branch being found in Indo-China, while Khasi, spoken in Assam, is another. The fact that Khasis are Mongoloid and that their society is matri-

[1] B. S. Guha, *op. cit.*, p. 38. [2] Oxford University Press, 1926.
[3] *Census Report of India*, 1931, Vol. I, Ch. x, p. 348.

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linear is an example of the danger in seeking to base racial history on linguistic affinities; but as recently as 1943 Professor S. K. Chatterji[1] speaks of the Austric race, in which he follows scholars like Schmidt and Hévésy.

The Santals first began to attract the attention of Europeans during the first half of the nineteenth century. The first book on the Santals, published in 1867, was entitled *Sonthalia and the Sonthals*. The writer, E. G. Man,[2] had by then been serving a period as an Assistant Commissioner in the newly formed district of the Santal Parganas. It is natural that the Santals attracted most attention in that district, where they were not only found in the greatest numbers, but where also they had risen in rebellion in 1855. Long before the rebellion the government had indeed become aware of their existence and of the special problems which they presented to the administration. An earlier report,[3] the result of an investigation into the land tenures of the "hill people", or Paharias, of the Raj Mahal hills, which had been written in 1819, could not fail to make some reference to the Santals, who at that period were engaged in a mass migration into the area and were driving the Paharias into the farther fastnesses of the hills. At an even earlier date Francis Buchanan's account[4] of the district of Bhagalpur in 1810–11 gives a short account of some "five hundred families" of Santals whom he found in the Dumka subdivision in 1809.

Another early account was published in W. W. Hunter's *Annals of Rural Bengal*.[5] The writer claimed little first-hand knowledge and based his description on information supplied by the American Baptist missionaries who began work among the Santals in the western portions of the Midnapore district and in Orissa. The first reference to the Santals in the papers of the American Free-Will Baptist Mission, as it was then called, is alive with all the excitement of a new discovery. In the journal of "Brother Noyes", under the date December 29, 1838, he records: "Came to a small village in the heart of a dense jungle. As soon as I came in sight of the houses, I felt persuaded I was coming among old acquaintances, they so much resembled the stick huts of the Coles of Cumbhulpore.

[1] S. K. Chatterji, *Oxford Pamphlets on Indian Affairs*, "The Linguistic Problem", 1943.
[2] E. G. Man, *Sonthalia and the Sonthals*, London, Calcutta, 1867.
[3] H. C. Sutherland, *Report on the Management of the Rajmahal Hills*, dated June 8, 1819, Deputy Commissioner's Record Room, Dumka.
[4] F. Buchanan, *An Account of the District of Bhagalpur in 1810–11*, Patna, 1939.
[5] W. W. Hunter, *Annals of Rural Bengal*, London, 1868.

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When I saw the jet-black people, with a necklace of white beads about their necks, and their peculiar dress, if dress it might be called, I was more confirmed in my opinion. I immediately alighted from my horse and inquired if that was a village of the Coles, but was not a little surprised at being so soon transported from the Oriyas to a people who could not understand a word I said. I looked about with astonishment at the romantic change, till at length I found an old man who could speak broken Oriya, of whom I gained the following information. He said they were not Coles, but Santals."[1] The author of the *Annals* relied largely on information supplied to him by the Rev. Jeremiah Phillips, who was a pioneer in the study of the language. The following occurs in the Annual Report of the mission for the year 1846: "During the past year Brother Phillips has acquired some knowledge of the language of this people (the Santals), by which he has been able to commence efforts for their improvement, which it is believed will result in great good to this hitherto neglected portion of the inhabitants of Orissa. He has performed a journey of some two or three weeks among them, which was very serviceable and interesting to him. He has published a tract of 8 pages, which is the first work ever published in the Santal dialect."

The Santals have been living in South-West Bengal for at least three hundred years. It is probable that they have been there for about five hundred years. There is agreement among the authorities that they moved to their present sites from the more hilly districts of Chota Nagpur farther west. It has been computed that the village of Rangibari in Bankura district is over three hundred years old.[2] Such a long period of residence on the one site is exceptional; the great majority of the Santal villages of today cannot look back on so long a history. Wherever a tradition regarding the founders of a village has survived, one finds that the first settlers moved to their present abode from no great distance away. Regarding Barikul, we are told: "The one who tied the brown hen here was Haru Mañjhi, whose family came first from Aurasuri in Bogri—a distance of about thirty-five miles. They say that formerly there were many wild elephants in Bogri, and for fear of the elephants many of the inhabitants fled to other parts. Sorup and Haru

[1] This and the following quotation I owe to the kindness of the Rev. A. A. Berg, who enabled me to see early reports in his possession.

[2] M. C. McAlpin, *A Report on the Condition of the Santals in the Districts of Birghum, Bankura, Midnapore and North Balasore*, IV (20), Bengal Government, 1909.

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The organization which binds groups of villages together is loose by comparison with the village system. The Santals distinguish between the various sections of the country in which their villages are situated, calling them *parganas*. Each *pargana* has a distinctive name, which may be either the name of a village situated within its borders or a general name. Over each of the *parganas* a *parganath* is supposed to have jurisdiction. McAlpin's report, the result of an inquiry instituted by the Bengal Government which led to the Tenancy Amendment Act of 1918, in addition to its main purpose of suggesting measures for the protection of Santal lands, dealt also with the condition of the Santal village system. McAlpin reported that the *pargana* system was far gone in decay, and it is not possible to question his conclusion. Binu Hāsdāk' of Tantidanga, late *parganath* of the Sarenga area, was typical of his class. His mind was well stored with the customary law of the tribe, and from time to time he was called in by nearby villages to help more particularly with disputes arising out of marriage tangles. He was personally popular and had some prestige as the possessor of valuable remedies against sickness, but on his own confession his authority was of a very limited kind. "What can I do", he once said, "unless the people of the village are agreed?" There is the crux of the situation; in the village, public opinion is a wellnigh irresistible force. Binu used, nevertheless, to go happily about his errands, for among other advantages which accrued he received a fee amounting to one rupee four annas when a guilty party was fined.

Kinship ties share with the well-knit village system the governance of the Santal's daily life, regulating his relationships with his fellows. The tribe is divided into clans, and each clan is again divided into sub-clans. The clan descends through the father, and when girls marry they are taken into the clans of their husbands. The clans have a totemistic basis and they are exogamous. Land is conceived of as belonging to the clan. Although individual and family ownership is now the rule, Santals will not countenance the transfer of land from one clan to another. The one exception for which allowance is made has been forced on them by economic necessity; it occurs in the case of a man without sons who brings his daughter's husband into his own house to carry on the cultivation, the son-in-law thereby acquiring rights in the property for descendants. The rights conferred by Hindu personal law on daughters in the property of their fathers or on wives in the property of their

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The bulk of my data has been drawn from the Ranibandh and Raipur Thanas of the Bankura district. Unfortunately, I have been unable to obtain statistics of the distribution of the population in these two Thanas. The following statistics are of some interest:

	Sq. miles	*Houses*	*Population*	*Per sq. mile*
Ranibandh ..	166	8,052	47,823	288
Raipur	227	17,764	92,153	406

Ranibandh Thana has a much larger acreage of forest, and, although no figures were available, it is probable that almost 50 per cent. of the population are Santal, while in Raipur the number of Santals is unlikely to exceed 15,000.

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village and who also receive payment in cash and in kind for their work. They are thoroughly familiar with Santali, but their mother tongue is the village Bengali of the area. They observe their own caste rules and do not intermarry with the Santals, with whom they live on excellent terms. They have no part in the Santal village cult, and they make no contributions when collections are made throughout the village for festivals. Their own cult is locally characterized by *Dharma* worship; in one village a post is planted in the ground at the end of the month of *Pus*. On the first day of *Magh* (mid-January) the village Kamar stands on top of this post with a white cock in his hands, and after bowing to the four corners of the compass in turn he releases the cock, saying: "Take, Dharma, we give it to you." There is then a scramble among the Santal spectators to catch it, and the man who does so is rewarded by the gift of a sheep. This ceremony goes on alongside the Santal festival which is taking place at the same time.

Occasionally there are in Santal villages isolated houses belonging to people of other castes. In one village one finds a Muci family, leather workers whose chief occupation is to make and mend drums; in another a Tanti family, who are weavers. The Santals do not have a great regard for the Bauri, the most numerous of the cultivating castes in the area apart from themselves. Their chief complaint about the Bauri is that the latter will eat food left over by anyone, a practice which fills the Santals with horror. On the other hand, there are frequently close friendships between individual Santals and men of other castes. The practice of sealing a friendship by a symbolic exchange of gifts is prevalent, and there are instances where Santals have entered into such friendships with Bauris and, indeed, with folk of other races who are of the same sex. The usual method of cementing such friendships is known as the "flower friendship", which takes the form of an exchange of garlands, followed by mutual salutations and sharing beer or food together. Friendships sealed in this way result in an intimate relationship, a real sharing of burdens as well as of joys.

While some forms of exploitation have been checked, there are still many who appear to thrive on the ignorance of the Santal. I witnessed a scene in the village street of Kuchliaghati when a *Deku* trader was having dealings with the women of the village. He had come to collect from them quantities of resin from the *babla* tree, a species of acacia, and he was paying them by exchanging equal weights of salt for the resin. The

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different kinds of rice fields are Bengali. Maize, a cereal that is important in their economy, has a borrowed name, but other lesser cereals retain their Santali names. In Bankura the Santals have lost the use of their own numerals beyond seven, though apparently these are known and commonly used elsewhere. Even so, in Bankura the Santal word for "twelve" is still used in phrases connected with the recital of tribal traditions, as in the phrase *gelbar paris*, meaning the "twelve clans". Iron has a Santali name, but other metals now in use, such as lead, copper and brass, have Bengali names. In addition to brass and earthenware utensils, the Santals make extensive use of the leaves of the *sal* tree (Santali *sarjom*), which they plait to form many varieties of plates, cups, pipes and cigarettes, and they possess a wide vocabulary to distinguish between the different kinds. Brass and earthen pots they buy from others.[1]

The difficulties of determining the extent of their borrowings in the field of religion may be illustrated by the fact that the language of spells and of prayers offered at the time of sacrificing contains a strong admixture of Hindi-Bengali words. This would seem to indicate that there have been many borrowings at this point; but it is also possible that the one who makes the prayers, wishing to put himself into a favourable relation with the spirits, uses a special vocabulary and so removes himself from the common run of his people when he is acting as a mediator between them and the spirit world. Many of the songs sung nowadays are composed in Bengali. There is a large stock of riddles, some of which are asked and answered in Santali, others of which are asked and answered in Bengali, while yet others make use of both languages.[2]

Only incidental reference has been made to the impact of Moslem culture on Santal life. Reminiscences occur of the period of Moslem rule, such as the following statement: "Concerning the *Turuk* (*Turuk*, or Turk, the name by which Santals refer to Moslems), it is said that they ruin our spirits because they cut the throats of fowls the wrong way. If we eat

[1] Another discussion of the linguistic evidence, giving many examples, and the whole stated from a somewhat different point of view, is to be found in Professor Sten Konow's introduction to Bodding's collection of Folk-Tales.

[2] In a suggestive article published in *Africa* for June 1946, Professor F. C. Bartlett has expanded his thesis in the Julian Huxley lecture of 1944 that each primitive culture displays both "hard" and "soft" points. The methods which he has outlined for determining, in the examination of any particular culture, what constitute the hard and soft points, and in particular the story method, may furnish valuable results when applied to the study of Santal culture.

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the food of the *Turuk*, rice or other food, the spirits will run away. If anyone has fever or if we want to exorcize a spirit, we try to give him curds made by a *Turuk* to eat. They say that in olden times one Mirza Turuk drove us from the country we were in. On a certain plain we made ready twelve carts and fled away across the open country. Mirza Turuk searched and could not find us. He thought: 'I must search for the tracks of twelve carts.' However, as we drove the twelve carts one behind the other, we made only one track, and so he never found us." The local Moslem population is very small[1] and confined to one or two villages of weavers and cultivators, who are themselves deeply affected by the Hindu environment. No doubt the story is very different in those districts of Northern Bengal where the Moslems predominate, but even there the great dissimilarity between Moslem and Santal culture probably militates against influences passing from the one to the other.

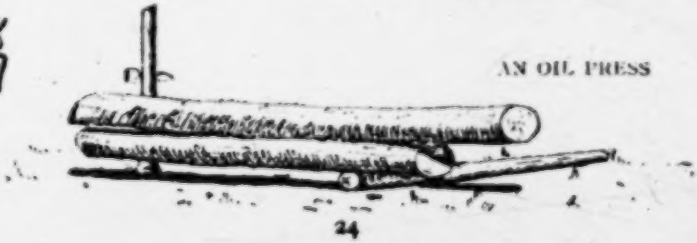
Christian influence, the result of a sustained and conscious effort on the part of missions, is considered later. Of deliberate efforts to Hinduize the religious practices and beliefs of the Santals the area is ignorant.

Note to Chapter 2

The relation of the aboriginal peoples to Hindu society has given rise to much controversy and discussion in India, not all of which is conducted in a spirit of scientific inquiry. An able presentation of many of the facts dealt with in this and the previous chapter, together with much else, and written from the Hindu standpoint, can be found in *The Aborigines—"So-called"—and Their Future*, by G. S. Ghurye, Ph.D. (Cantab.), published by the Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, 1943.

[1] The figures given for the local Moslem population in 1931 were as follows:

	Males	*Females*
Ranibandh Thana	238	190
Raipore Thana	358	278



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CHAPTER 5

SOME FOLK-TALES

FOLK-TALES are meant to entertain, and only incidentally do they instruct. The stories current among the Santals do, however, reveal standards of conduct; they hold up certain types of character as admirable, others as ridiculous or contemptible, and so help to form the judgment of their hearers. Over two hundred stories told by Santals are available in English, for this is a field that early attracted the attention of Europeans living among them. The first in the field was the Rev. F. T. Cole, who in 1875 printed two stories in the *Indian Antiquary*. A further collection of tales was published in 1891, collected by the Rev. A. Campbell. The collection of C. H. Bompas, entitled *Folklore of the Santal Parganas*, was published in 1909, and this has remained a standard collection in the West. Bodding's monumental work in three volumes was not published until the years 1925–29. It contains ninety-three stories with Santali text and English translation, and the same plan was followed in his other publications, *A Chapter of Santal Folklore*, which contains ten stories, and *Witchcraft among the Santals*, which contains eight. The editor of this last work, which was published after Bodding's death, states that C. H. Bompas obtained the manuscript of many stories from Bodding.[1]

The field is far from exhausted. All collections that have been published up till now have been gathered either in the Santal Parganas or in the district of Manbhum, except for eleven stories published in a book that deals with the Santals of Mayurbhanj,[2] the extreme south of the Santal country. The tales included here are told in the Bankura district and serve to illustrate the Santal attitude towards many of the facts mentioned in other chapters.

(1) *The Grey Monkey and a Boy*

At the end of a certain bazaar there were a great many trees where lived a band of grey monkeys. Each day one of the

[1] Oslo Ethnographical Museum, *Skrifter Bind* 3, Hefte 3, p. 437: "Years ago most of these tales have been retold from Mr. Bodding's manuscripts by C. H. Bompas in *Folklore of the Santal Parganas* (London, 1909)." For some of the facts in this paragraph I am indebted to an article entitled "The Folk-Tale in Santal Society", by Mildred Archer, *Man in India*, December 1944, Vol. XXIV.

[2] Charulal Mukherjea, *The Santals*, Indian Research Institute, Calcutta, 1943.

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CHAPTER 6

MYTHS AND THE CLAN ORGANIZATION

MANY of the social activities of the Santals are based on myths, and the strength of their clan organization is due in no small measure to its foundations in mythology. An examination of the intimate relationship between the two bears out the truth of such a statement as: "The sacred lore of the tribe is not a fanciful tale told in explanation of natural phenomena and inexplicable events, but a method of expressing certain ways of thinking and feeling about the facts of life and of regulating human actions."[1] When for any reason a piece of ritual associated with a myth falls into disuse, knowledge of that myth begins to die out; conversely, when the myth is looked upon as outmoded, the activity with which it is linked begins to lose its hold on the people's imagination. The Santal story of the origin of man and the division of the human race into clans does not appear to be known today in more than outline form, except by a very few, mostly of the older generation. It is recited in the village only on certain occasions—the *caco chatiar* ceremony, at which a child is formally admitted into the privileges of full membership in the tribe; the *Jom Sim* festival, an occasional clan celebration; and the *Karam* festival, which is an affair of the village. None of these institutions has a vigorous life in the area; the *caco chatiar* ceremony of today retains only a vestige of its ancient glory, the *Jom Sim* is very rarely performed, and the same is true of the *Karam* in its full form.[2] The village headman has to recite the myth, but not every headman now is capable of doing so. The decay of the ritual is leading to the disappearance of the ancient myth. It is nevertheless still true that these stories do reveal the Santal view of the world. When they are told they call forth assent, and frequently in ordinary conversation the myths are cited in order to point a moral or clinch an argument. Though there are few who are ready to recite the whole story, some part of it is still familiar to everyone.

The Santal story of the origin of man has been recorded in slightly varying form by different authorities.[3] It did not escape

[1] E. O. James, *Comparative Religion*, Methuen, 1938, p. 335.

[2] Further reference is made to these festivals in the chapter on "Festivals".

[3] The fullest account in English is in *Traditions and Institutions of the Santals*, translated with notes and additions by P. O. Bodding from the Santali text published in 1887 by L. O. Skrefsrud, edited (after the translator's death) by Sten Konow. Oslo, 1942.

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It is worth noticing how the number "twelve" recurs in the traditions. Periods of twelve years are mentioned and twelve clans are named. Santal tradition is unanimous in talking of twelve clans, but there is little agreement about the names of the twelve. Santals using the clan suffix Ḍonka are unknown at the present day; local tradition says that they have changed their clan because of the odium attached to the murder of a monkey and the fact that they were reputed by some to sacrifice and eat monkeys. The conjecture of the narrator that the Ḍonka took the name of Bhaduli cannot be accepted. Two families in the area are known to have adopted the name Bhaduli, but they are members of a sub-clan of the Mạrnḍi. One of the Bhaduli could relate little or nothing about the myths of his clan, but he remembered a song that celebrated an old quarrel between the Mạrnḍi and the Kisku in which the former are referred to as Bhaduli and the latter as Koinḍa. The Bhaduli observe the same taboos as the rest of the Mạrnḍi. P. O. Bodding gives the name of the lost clan as Bedea,[1] a title that is not known in the area. The great interest that Santals themselves take in the determination of these matters was well illustrated by a lively correspondence initiated by a number of educated Santals and carried on for some time during the year 1944 in the pages of the weekly paper *Pẹṛa Hoṛ*.[2]

The clans are exogamous and, with two exceptions, the members of one clan may marry a person belonging to any of the other clans. The first exception to the general rule prohibits a marriage between a Mạrnḍi and a Kisku because of the quarrel in which these two clans were involved. The second prohibits the marriage of a Ṭuḍu and a Besra. The story behind this taboo was thus related by a member of the Ṭuḍu clan: "All twelve kinds of Ṭuḍu were exceedingly fond of dancing and singing, and they used to dance twelve dances in a single night. Well, one day two of the Ṭuḍu made a plan. Across the river from where they lived some girls of the Besra clan were engaged every day in grinding rice, and the youths thought to themselves: 'Tonight we shall get them out to dance the whole night through.' When they reached the river they found that it was in flood, and so they began to wonder how they would be able to get across. They walked along the bank looking out carefully till at last they found a creeping plant that stretched right across the river, its roots being on this side, while it was

[1] *Santali Dictionary*, Vol. IV, p. 596.
[2] Official organ of the Santal Mission of the Northern Churches, Dumka.

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Society takes little notice of the child before it is born, but, through the person of the father, the family and the clan begin to assert their interests. The restrictions enjoined on the father suggest that although his rôle in the heredity of the child is considered to be a relatively minor one, he is nevertheless an instrument through which the future child may be brought into danger and so hurt the interests of the family. During the period of his wife's pregnancy he must strictly observe the rule against taking life and he must avoid all contact with dead bodies. He is therefore excused from all participation in funeral ceremonies; he may not help to carry a corpse or even enter a house in which a death has taken place. If the annual hunt falls during the period he is allowed to accompany the men of the village, but he is not allowed to kill or to carry a slain animal or bird. He must not eat flesh from the head of any animal slain in the hunt or offered in sacrifices.[1] He is not separated from his wife, and my information suggests that intercourse is usual up to about the sixth month. There is a very strong sentiment against a man having sexual intercourse with another woman during his wife's pregnancy. There appears to be no rule as to when intercourse may be resumed after the birth of the child. The women speculate concerning the sex of the coming child. If the mother begins to look sickly, and especially if she becomes thin round the neck, it is a sign that she will have a boy. Although the "quickening" is not marked by any ceremonial, it is recognized as a definite stage in the life of both the new individual and of the mother. When a woman dies with child the procedure to be followed varies according to whether the death has followed the first quickening or not.[2]

Midwives are engaged for the delivery. They are to be found in every large Santal village, and they are generally old women, themselves grandmothers. They receive no special training, but they develop the "knack" for their work by assisting others, and they launch out on their own practice when they have established a reputation for being handy and capable. The midwife may be someone connected with the family, but, if so, she should

[1] Bodding, in the *Santali Dictionary* (Vol. III, p. 337), reports a custom in connection with the *Jom Sim* festival which accords a certain status to the child before birth. I have been unable to confirm his statement. He says that when the *Jom Sim* is observed in the family of a pregnant woman she is served with two platefuls of rice because she is, or rather she represents, "two souls".

[2] The procedure to be followed in the former event and the reason underlying it have already been described in Chapter 8; see p. 92 above.

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58 852 been a second marriage, and as they were extremely poor their plea to set up house together had been allowed and the marriage celebration that had been postponed was indefinitely suspended. The time came when they wished to arrange a marriage for their eldest son and they found themselves involved in a difficulty. Until the formal celebration of their own marriage had taken place their son could not marry because in its absence they could not carry out the *caco chaṭiar* of their boy. The problem was solved by going through one of the permitted forms of marriage themselves, after which on the same day they performed the initiation of their three sons. They were scolded by the villagers who gathered for the occasion, but again pleaded their poverty.

852 574 The whole of the population of the village is invited for the ceremony, and each person must at the very least be given two cups of beer for each child on whose behalf the ceremony is being held. The feast for the whole village is not practicable except for a very few, and it is regarded as sufficient if the village officials are presented with a meal of rice and meat or chicken curry. If possible, the midwife who presided at the birth of the children bathes them in the courtyard by pouring water over them; and if she cannot, this is done by one of the old women present. Water is also sprinkled over the assembled guests. The *jog-māṇjhi* [538] [624] recites the myth of Santal origins; beginning from the account of the creation of the world and the founding of the clans, he brings the story up to date by leading to the birth of the children in the particular family with which the villagers are at that moment concerned. Then there follows a dance in the courtyard, and songs are sung in honour of the family. The event [535] [533] is neither preceded nor followed by any period of instruction. Such materials as exist for comparing the institution in different parts of the Santal country suggest that possibly its observance [184] is of greater importance in the north, particularly in the Santal Parganas. Bodding has described the ceremony, basing his • 114 852 account on the published Santali account of the traditions.[1] Recently a long and full account of the ceremonial has been published in Santali, and this account comes from the same area but does not include a description of an actual observance.[2] On the other hand, Mr. C. L. Mukherjea's account of Santal culture to the extreme south in the state of Mayurbhanj[3] omits all

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 132]

[1] P. O. Bodding, *Santali Dictionary*, Vol. I, p. 443.
[2] Stephen H. Murmu, *Karam or Caco Chaṭiar*, Dumka, 1945.
[3] C. L. Mukherjea, *The Santals*, Calcutta, 1943.

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reference to the *caco chatiar*, which suggests that it is at the very least an inconspicuous element in the life of the area.

The universal custom among Santals of cicatrization of the boys and tattooing among girls may have been connected originally with initiation, though there is no evidence of any such connection in the past and it certainly does not exist at the present time. Boys make a number of self-inflicted burns on their left forearm. The resultant circular scars are usually five in number, but the only rule is that the number of scars must be an odd number, for the odd numbers signify life while even numbers mean death. There may be only one scar and there may be as many as seven. There is no ceremonial to accompany the practice and boys burn themselves as soon as they are old enough to understand the shame of the cowardice implied by the non-possession of the scars. They usually do it when they are out in the fields together herding the village cattle. A fire is lit and a small piece of rag is rolled and set alight. Each boy then presses the burning rag on to the skin of his left forearm as often as he wishes to do so, and the marks remain for life. The operation is known as *siku*. Santals believe that they will be known by these marks in the after-life and if they do not show them to the guardians of the next world they will be eaten by worms as "large as a foot-pedal rice husker". The same explanation is given for the custom of tattooing the girls.[1] Apart from this motive there is no evidence for a magico-religious basis of the practice. The term for tattooing is *khoda*, and girls must in all cases be tattooed before their marriage. The whole operation may not be completed at once, but may be spread over two or three cold seasons during which the tattooers carry on their work. In this area the work is done by women of one of the blacksmith castes who come from districts to the west. During the cold weather they go from one village to another, and they are, of course, paid for their work. The operation is performed with a long needle, and the dye consists of lampblack which is mixed with human milk—if possible with the milk of the tattooer. There is no relation between the designs and the clan to which the recipient belongs. Marks are tattooed on the temples, also on the side of the nose, on the cheeks and on the chin. Designs to look like necklaces are common, and sometimes there is a decorative belt round the waist. Arms are decorated as with bangles and armlets, and there may be a design on the back of

[1] W. Crooke (*Religion and Folklore in Northern India*, p. 196) alludes to the practice among other tribes and castes.

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addition to the bride price, to receive a cloth for the bride's mother, one for her father's eldest sister and one each for her two grandmothers.

Some agreement must also be reached about the time of the marriage. This must not take place in the month in which either the bridegroom or bride was born. Formerly, I was told, there was no other prohibition regarding the month. Nowadays, however, the general practice of Hindus in Northern India is followed. Astrologers are not consulted, but marriages may not take place during the rains, and the most popular months are during the spring when the harvest has been gathered in and food is abundant. When the time is approaching, the actual date of the wedding is arranged by the go-between, and the *giṛi* is used to mark off the days remaining.

The whole community in both villages is vitally concerned in the due celebration of the wedding, and this fact is emphasized by the rôle of the village officials. The *jogmaṅjhi* of the bride's village acts as the master of ceremonies from the time when the marriage booths have to be erected until the end. The headman of the bridegroom's village does not take part in the preliminary visits by virtue of his office, but when the two families immediately involved are satisfied that they wish to proceed, both headmen are called in. They have to be present when the engagement is confirmed, and they are consulted about suitable dates. The final "contract" at the climax of the wedding celebrations is entered into by the people of the two villages, and it is made by the respective headmen. The village priest also plays a part, for the community involved in the marriage includes the spirits, who are guardians of the welfare of the tribe, and the ancestors, guardians of family and clan. Their blessing has to be sought. In an interesting passage Dr. Verrier Elwin says of the marriage ceremonial of the tribes of the Maikal hills: "There is little religion in it." On any definition of religion it would be difficult to maintain this thesis with regard to Santal marriage. The whole passage is quoted here, for the rest of what is said does apply in most of its detail to the Santal form of marriage: "We have already spoken of this ceremony as a work of art. There is little religion in it, but it has great social and symbolic value. It is hard to conceive of a better way of impressing on a man and woman their social and sexual union. The tying together of the clothes, the exchange of rings, the first meals together, the ceremonies by the river that symbolize mutual aid in domestic, sexual and food-obtaining activities, are of great significance.

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DEATH

763 When a person is dying inside a house a great effort is made to
764 remove him into the open before the *jiri* departs, for otherwise it will have difficulty in leaving the house, but the concern felt in this case is probably more on behalf of the living than the dead. The road by which the soul leaves the body is not known with certainty, for in addition to the nose or mouth it may depart through the ears, or, as I was informed in a case where a girl had died with her eyes staring wide open, "Her *jiri* went out through her eyes." Some of the ideas current about the future life have a
765 moral content. There is at least an aspiration that the inequalities of this life will be rectified in the next. In the folk-tale [538] quoted above[1] the boon was granted, and to the comfort of the woman who asked the questions she saw the soul of a poor man being treated with great respect, while the soul of a rich man, in this case her own father-in-law, was very roughly handled. Many such stories are told about the souls of Brahmins and men of low castes. Ideas are also held about punishment in the future life. This is reserved for those who have gone scot-free in this world. Those who were greedy are made to carry baskets of dung on their heads. Special tortures are also in store for those *who wilfully shirk the payment of their debts, and above all for* those who transgress the tribal code of sexual morality as well as for those who fail to show the traditional tribal marks on their bodies.

It would be surprising if any people in India did not show some trace of belief in reincarnation. The Santals accept it in a general way, but it has no great hold on their thinking. Hutton [114] has inferred that the belief in reincarnation in India is a develop- [171] ment from the theory of soul-matter or material life-substance of which he has found evidence through examining the cult of the dead among the hill tribes of Assam.[2] There is no need to hark back to such origins to account for the vague belief in reincarnation that is held by Santals at the present day. Every Indian village is able to furnish stories of recognition and memory which "prove" to the satisfaction of the villagers the assertion that men return to this earth in a different form after death, thus popularizing the doctrine of *karma*, which is one of the few beliefs universally accepted by Hindus and is one of the great achievements of Hindu thought. The Santals are surrounded by this atmosphere; accepting it, they repeat the stories which they hear and add others to the common stock. The

[1] See page 158.

[2] J. H. Hutton, *Census Report of India*, 1931, Vol. I, Ch. xi.

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The custom of naming is not directly related to the belief in reincarnation, for the names of grandparents and others are bestowed on children even though they are still alive. As we have seen, the spirits sometimes make their wishes known when they want a particular name to be given. This appears to be due to the fact that one of them feels that he has not been duly honoured rather than that the dead person in question has actually been born again in the person of the child.

The nature of the tie that binds *jivi* and *hormo* together remains obscure. *Jivi* is in a sense identified with the breath which departs from the body at death, but the identification is not complete, for the *jivi* may also leave the body during sleep and unconsciousness. In grammar the Santals distinguish between the animate and the inanimate. Bodding states: "One might be tempted to define the animate as that which has a 'substance' with something living, a living force, inside this, that makes it capable of acting and moving; a combination of 'matter' and a spirit or spirit force is demanded."[1] This cautious and tentative statement by the greatest authority on the Santali language illustrates the difficulty encountered when we try to reduce Santal belief to a system. When the word *jivi* is used alone with a predicate it is constructed as inanimate; on the other hand, anything possessed of *jivi* is regarded as animate.

Ancestor worship serves to keep the memory of the dead alive and welds the community of the living into one with those who have lived in the past. The dead go on a journey; but although they join the ancestors they are not far away, and their welfare is bound up with that of the tribe even as the welfare of the tribe is bound up with theirs. At the end of life people look forward to reunion with their loved ones. I well remember an old woman who was sunning herself one cold morning outside her house. I was passing through the village and stood to talk with her for a few moments. "Where is your husband?" I asked. "He is gone", she replied, indicating the sky; then she added: "I shall soon join him. He is building a house for the two of us, and when it is ready he will call me." Had she, I wondered, had a dream in which her dead husband had appeared to her? I did not ask and I have never learnt.

[1] P. O. Bodding, *Materials for a Santali Grammar*, Pt. II, p. 49.

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of ties that have been maintained with kinsfolk and something on the general regard for the individuals concerned. The same variety is found in the degree to which precautions against *bhut* and other unseen adversaries are observed, but a new element has been introduced in the prayer offered on the occasion by the local leader of the church. Infant Baptism follows usually during some part of the first year of the child's life. Very young children are withheld from Baptism as a rule, and this may be partly due to a feeling that the ceremony is in some way dangerous to the new-born infant. Among some people it is sought in connection with the time when the child first begins to eat rice; among others it is customary for them to offer their children in Baptism on Christmas Day. When the child is taken to church to be baptized both the parents and the child are dressed in new clothes and relatives and neighbours are invited to a feast in the home of the child.

Many pre-Christian elements remain in the preparations made for marriage. The choice of marriage partners is still largely in the hands of the parents of the bridegroom and the bride. The services of a go-between are engaged and ceremonial visits take place during the course of which the bride price is negotiated and paid. During the early years of the mission the custom of bride price was actively discouraged, but a fuller understanding of its importance has led to a tacit acceptance by the authorities; in the meanwhile it is now often referred to by Christians under the name of "mutual help". The rise of economic standards in the Christian community is reflected in a tendency among parents of Christian girls to demand a bride price higher than the rate current in the non-Christian community. From time to time Christians have met to discuss means by which the bride price may be fixed and excessive demands restricted. On the eve of the religious ceremony which is central in Christian marriage the traditional anointing is observed in the homes of both parties to the marriage and many of the traditional songs are sung. A Christian explained these ceremonies by saying that they are regarded as a way of saying to the bride and bridegroom: "From now you are separate." It cannot be denied that they are an effective way of emphasizing this truth.

The marriage-ceremony, which has to be conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Indian Christian Marriage Act, is held either in a church building or, where there is no church, in the courtyard of the bride's home. The last occasion on which I was present at a Santal Christian marriage was in February 1945.

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[The Santal Christian Community]

when they would sit and eat together. The feast took some time to prepare; the bride's relations—her parents were dead and she was married from the home of a paternal aunt, a blind widow—had provided a goat, but as they were in poor circumstances the Christian villagers had contributed the rice from their homes. While the guests waited for the food there was a good deal of singing, the songs being both traditional and Christian. Here are some examples noted at the time:

Two bows and six arrow shafts I kept in store.
The arrowheads have been sent ahead to *Radha*;[1]
The money also has been sent ahead to *Radha*.[2]

You who should have come yesterday at noon,
Why, sons, did you arrive in the evening?

Three headmen from three villages
Wrangled over the marriage booth;
They did not want to let go the vermilion giving.[3]

The daughter bids farewell and goes;
The house is forlorn, father, the house is forlorn.
The rice in the straw bundle has been pushed out;
Its wooden platform is forlorn, father, its wooden platform is forlorn.[4]

The following song struck a Christian note:

My life (Jesus) and your life,
Two lives (Jesus) are bound together;
Like the *alak* creeper and the *bandi*[5] creeper,
Like the spider web in the palmyra tree,
Two lives (Jesus) are bound together.[6]

On this occasion I was unable to remain to witness the final farewell and homegoing, but these follow closely the traditional Santal way.

In the death ceremonies there is little trace of pre-Christian modes of thought. This is not surprising in view of the fact that Christian teaching not only gives a new significance to the individual but also has something definite to say about the destiny of the human soul after death. The difference is emphasized for

[1] The name of the bridegroom's village.
[2] See Appendix B, No. 31.
[3] Two forest creepers.
[4] See Appendix B, No. 31.
[5] See Appendix B, No. 33.
[6] See Appendix B, No. 34.